Respect and Integrity

It is very important that coaches, players and umpires have respect and understanding for each one of their roles and the importance of their roles in a baseball game. Each has a valuable role in their participation. Umpires appreciate these three traits:

- Total control of their team, players and coaches.
- A fundamental respect for the game of baseball.
- A mutual working relationship based on respect.

**Total control**

Having total control of their team is what will earn the respect of umpires the quickest. Umpires are a small community of people that have an extraordinary passion for baseball and their role within the game. Umpires love working a game when they know before the game even starts that the coach has such control over his team that if we hear any disagreement it will only be coming from him.

**Fundamental respect**

Coaches have a realistic expectation that umpires know the game and have the ability to act in accordance with the situation at hand. On the other hand, umpires respect coaches that understand when is, and when is not, the best situation to address a play with an umpire. Coaches that have control and discuss a play when they should, earn respect.

**Mutual working relationship**

It’s something that is earned by the umpire over time. Doing the little things, being in the right place at the right time, ability to really focus, challenge themselves on each pitch, to understand that a play could happen at any time and to react correctly to that situation. This will lead you to build your experience at the highest levels and being assigned the biggest assignments.

“There is tremendous amount of respect between coaches and umpires. Disagreements are going to happen but with college baseball growing in popularity, coaches and umpires need to work together and make the effort to lower ejections and be the best role models to all student-athletes,” said Scott

The American College Baseball Coaches Association (ACBCA) and the American Society of Professional Umpires Inc. (ASPU) want to remind you that the game of baseball is a team sport and that it is the coaches and umpires that represent the game. Coaches and umpires need to work together to make sure that the integrity of the game is met as Vic Maldonado of El Paso, Texas, is doing with coach Ray Birmingham.

2016 NCAA Ejection/Suspension Reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division I</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Player</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Coach</td>
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<td>Head Coach</td>
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<td>Total:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Player</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Coach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Head Coach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
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<td>Player</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Coach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Head Coach</td>
<td>89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total:</td>
<td>693</td>
<td>100%</td>
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Welcome to the 2017 Baseball Season

The information in this 2017 NCAA Baseball Preseason Guide is designed to provide, not only information, but also clarifications leading into the season. Umpires need to keep up to date with their development. It’s helpful for study groups and pregame discussions. Coaches, please keep this with your game day materials as a quick reference. In addition, the Preseason Guide will be posted on the HOME PLATE page at www.ncaabaseball.arbitersports.com. Head coaches, please register as well to have access to NCAA Baseball’s Home Plate.

College baseball is rapidly loading, reloading, expanding — and there is no sign of the game’s excitement, popularity and exposure slowing down. Here are a few things of note this season:

The hit-by-pitch (HBP) interpretation in 2016 did cut down those gaining an unfair advantage by trying to intentionally get hit by the pitch.

Here are a few comments from head coaches regarding HBP if the batter’s action is deemed intentional: “The rule now has a much better clarification,” and, “Stop rewarding pitchers who cannot command the inside part of the plate, making poor pitches and missing spots,” and, “For competent hitters this is much better and any batter that intentionally leans into or tries to get hit should not be granted a base. This language is superior, makes much more sense.”

The baseball rules committee feels this wording will greatly aid in better enforcement and compliance with this rule.

The violent and unnecessary collisions were greatly diminished in 2016 — much in part to specific coaches’ instruction and specific protocol to the umpire as to what is going to be allowed by the runner and catcher. As we move into 2017, the collision rule will read, if a runner is attempting to score, he may not deviate from his direct pathway to the plate in order to initiate contact with the catcher or other player covering home plate.

A few more comments from head coaches: “Once again, ensure the safety of both the runner and fielder,” and, “Catching should be required to give a lane to the runner — this will cause fewer collisions.”

The rules committee believes that this will cut down on even more unnecessary collisions at home plate and allow umpires to enforce the rule with a much greater level of consistency. Beginning this season, instant replay may be used in deciding all scoring plays at home plate, inclusive of collisions (illegal and/or malicious slides) or time plays.

There are some new rules and updated language that are important for coaches and umpires to know for the 2017 season. Thank you to the rules committee and Randy Bruns (Secretary-Rules Editor) and Ben Brownlee (NCAA baseball rules committee staff liaison) for their time and effort. The halted game language has been redefined involving non-conference games; administration of advancing winning run; instant replay is no longer an experimental rule; and scoring plays at home plate, inclusive of collisions, are now reviewable. One of the biggest rule changes is pitchers have to have their shoulders and chest generally facing the batter in the windup position. This allows base runners and umpires to determine if the pitcher is in the windup or set position. Coaches have started making the initial pitching mechanics changes to comply with the new rule. Umpires, if you see this in your games, talk with the pitcher and coach and correct this right away. This constitutes a warning. If it continues, enforce the penalty under the rule.

Reminders: We can improve upon our games’ pace of play. We need to understand the enforcement of the timing factors. Umpires need to warn, enforce the penalty and move on with the game. Calling time should not be automatically granted to a batter. It should be only used for safety reasons or if a pitcher freezes the hitter too long. Coaches, you have told me many times that umpires are doing a much better job of not going too far off the plate to call strikes (TV/video impact), but need reminding of the pitch at the top of the strike zone. The NCAA Sport Science Institute’s Spit Tobacco Survey indicated that coaches, umpires and players chew to some extent and there is zero tolerance.

The Baseball Umpire Program is very excited about partnering with Douglas Ramos, M.D., of Creighton University. He is dedicated to assisting umpires become mentally and physically ready to meet the week-in and week-out challenges which lie ahead in college baseball.

As was stated on the previous page, we all need to stay attentive to the

See “Drouches” p. 11
Collision Course at the Plate

To reduce collisions at the plate, the rules committee rewrote the collision rule.

A runner while attempting to score may not deviate from his direct pathway to the plate in order to initiate contact with the catcher (or other player covering home plate), or otherwise initiate an avoidable collision. If the umpire judges that a runner initiated contact, the umpire shall declare the runner out.

In such circumstances, the ball is dead, and all other baserunners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the collision. If the runner slides into the plate in an appropriate manner and contact occurs, the umpire will let play continue with no penalty.

A runner who lowers his shoulder, or pushes through with his hands, elbows or arms in an effort to touch the plate, would be in violation of Collision Rule 8-7.

On a feet-first slide, a runner’s buttocks and legs should hit the ground before any contact with the catcher. In the case of a head-first slide, a runner shall be deemed to have slid appropriately if his body hits the ground before any contact with the catcher. If a catcher blocks the pathway of the runner, the umpire shall not find that the runner initiated an avoidable collision in violation of the Collision Rule.

Additionally, in order to block the plate, the catcher must have possession of the ball. If the catcher doesn’t have possession of the ball and blocks the pathway of the runner, the umpire shall call the runner safe. But, if the catcher blocks the pathway of the runner in a legitimate attempt to field a throw — even if the throw is bad and pulls him into the pathway of the runner — he is not considered blocking the plate.

The goal of this rule is to provide clarifications of the Collision Rule and provide a safer game environment for the student-athletes.

Officially Warned

To improve communication between umpires and coaches, a new term was added: “Official Warning.” An Official Warning is a warning from an umpire that carries the words, “This is your official warning. If you continue, you will leave me no option but to eject you.” Saying, “Knock it off,” “That’s enough,” “Don’t say anything else,” or, “I’ve heard enough,” doesn’t constitute an official warning.

This now establishes a clear understanding of what an official warning is prior to an ejection. Umpires are to write on the back of the lineup card when the official warning occurs. This should include the coach, the inning and situation that constituted the warning. The goal is to reduce the number of ejections in all divisions in college baseball. Coaches and umpires need to work together in building a professional relationship that everyone can enjoy.
# NCAA Misconduct Penalties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Offense</th>
<th>Offender</th>
<th>Consequence for First Offense</th>
<th>Consequence for Second Offense</th>
<th>Consequence for Third Offense</th>
<th>Rule Ref.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unsportsmanlike conduct or language directed toward an umpire or opponent</td>
<td>Assistant coach, player or team personnel</td>
<td>Ejection from present contest - one game suspension</td>
<td>Ejection from present contest - three game suspension</td>
<td>Same as second offense</td>
<td>Rule 2-26-f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game misconduct—removing team from the field; refusing to continue</td>
<td>Head coach</td>
<td>Ejection from the present contest - no suspension</td>
<td>Same as first offense</td>
<td>Same as first offense</td>
<td>2-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game misconduct for arguing, directed at an umpire or unsportsmanlike conduct</td>
<td>Player whose last listed position is that of a pitcher</td>
<td>Ejection from the present contest - two-game (2) suspension</td>
<td>Same as first offense</td>
<td>Same as first offense</td>
<td>2-26-e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prolonged or continued arguing, offensive language or excessive expressions</td>
<td>Any participant</td>
<td>Two-game suspension added to the present accumulative total for applicable suspension penalties</td>
<td>Same as first offense</td>
<td>Same as first offense</td>
<td>2-26-hc; 5-15-a (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting</td>
<td>Any participant</td>
<td>Ejection plus a four-game suspension</td>
<td>Ejection plus a suspension for the team’s next five contests</td>
<td>5-16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical abuse of participants or umpires</td>
<td>Any participant includes head coach</td>
<td>Ejection plus a four-game suspension</td>
<td>Ejection plus a suspension for the team’s next five contests</td>
<td>5-16-b</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaving position to participants in a fight</td>
<td>Any participant</td>
<td>Four-game suspension after the ejection</td>
<td>Suspended for the remainder of the season</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>5-16-c, Penalty (1), (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentionally throwing at a batter</td>
<td>Pitcher, or pitcher and head coach</td>
<td>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</td>
<td>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</td>
<td>Ejection plus a suspension for the remainder of the season, including postseason competition</td>
<td>5-16-d, (1), (5), (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal abuse/bench jockeying</td>
<td>Any participant or game personnel other than head coach</td>
<td>After a warning, offender is ejected for that game plus one game suspension</td>
<td>When verbal abuse/bench jockeying continues, head coach is ejected (no suspension). All others ejection plus one game suspension</td>
<td>Same as second offense</td>
<td>5-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure to leave sight and sound of the playing field and grandstands</td>
<td>Any participant</td>
<td>Three-game suspension added to any penalties already accumulated</td>
<td>Same as first offense</td>
<td>Same as first offense</td>
<td>3-6-d, Note 2 and 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collision rule</td>
<td>Player</td>
<td>Ejection from the present contest. One game suspension</td>
<td>Same as first offense</td>
<td>Same as first offense</td>
<td>8-7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ejection for tobacco use</td>
<td>Player or team personnel and head coach</td>
<td>Ejected from present contest plus one game suspension for everyone other than the head coach</td>
<td>Same as first offense</td>
<td>Same as first offense</td>
<td>3-11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Common ejections for actions of unsportsmanlike behavior not directed toward an umpire</td>
<td>Assistant coach, player or team personnel</td>
<td>Ejection from present contest plus one game suspension</td>
<td>Ejected from present contest plus three (3) game suspension</td>
<td>Same as second offense</td>
<td>2-26-f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-participation ejection for actions directed toward an umpire or official</td>
<td>Assistant coach, player or team personnel</td>
<td>Ejection from next contest plus one game suspension. These two games will be added to any other applicable penalties for other offenses</td>
<td>Ejection from next scheduled contest plus three game suspension for a total of four games. These four games will be added to any other applicable penalties for other offenses</td>
<td>Same as second offense</td>
<td>2-26-c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-participation ejection for actions that are not directed toward the game or umpire</td>
<td>Any participant or game personnel</td>
<td>Ejection from next contest plus one game suspension. These two games will be added to any other applicable penalties for other offenses</td>
<td>Ejection from next scheduled contest plus three game suspension for a total of four games. These four games will be added to any other applicable penalties for other offenses</td>
<td>Same as second offense</td>
<td>2-26-c; Appendix D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-participation ejection</td>
<td>Head coach</td>
<td>Ejected from team’s next game-No Suspension</td>
<td>Same as first offense</td>
<td>Same as first offense</td>
<td>2-26-c; Appendix D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-participation ejection for a pitcher</td>
<td>Player whose last listed position is that of a pitcher</td>
<td>A total suspension of four games</td>
<td>Same as first offense</td>
<td>Same as first offense</td>
<td>2-26-e</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

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

**Note 3:** A listing of ejection and suspension penalties is contained in Appendix D.
Preseason Championship

The off-season is really the time to work on all aspects of your health and well-being. With the hectic schedule of the season, there is little time to commit to a dedicated and consistent training or eating regimen. As in all sports in general, the major gains in performance are made in the off-season. The off-season is not the time to slack off, but is the time to really gear it up in regards to sharpening your mind and body. Mental and physical rest after the long season is healthy and serves as a good recharge to avoid mental and physical burnout. Your schedule in the off-season should be structured so you are peaking right about the time the season begins. Also, the off-season is the time to get a complete history and physical, particularly to evaluate lingering musculoskeletal injuries and be sure you are in peak respiratory and cardiac capacity. Cardiac disease can sneak up on many of us, particularly smokers and diabetics. The physicality demanded in some of the weather conditions can stress these body systems to a considerable degree. Being the competitors that we all are, we frequently feel that a workout has to really hurt to be worthwhile. Nothing could be further from the truth and pain is really not the endpoint. In some situations the joints are actually injured further from over training. As you get older, less impactful exercises can be more beneficial than some high impact hard exercising (for example, yoga, pilates, walking, and biking to name a few). There are several scientific studies that show that some of these provide better pain relief in some circumstances than medications. Because of the extreme conditions that some of you are exposed to, “hot yoga” can assist in “hyperthermic conditioning” by actually changing issues related to blood flow and plasma volumes in your body. Before stepping into any workout regimen, if you are not committed to avoiding smoking, eating a healthy diet and managing your weight, then many of the perceived gains will be lost. You owe it to yourself and your family, and for your well-being, long after your days on the field.

The first thing with any workout or event is a warm-up and warm-down period of 10-15 minutes. The warm-down period is often neglected. Since timing is usually very precise as it relates to game management, this can be accomplished. It requires a little larger area than just the locker room. There is some evidence that stretching may not be as good as we once thought it was, and “bounce” stretching may in fact be detrimental.

Because of the job umpires are asked to do on the field, improvement on pivot motions, arm strength and core strength need to be part of an everyday regimen. Study your body as much as you study the rules of the game and make a commitment to get yourself in good condition. If you happen to carry extra pounds, as many of us do, these extra pounds makes us tired, slows our focus and prevents us from being at the top of our game. It is hard to come up with a set plan that will work for everyone and it may not be a bad idea as you start to seek out someone to advise you on a plan to start. You also need to come up with realistic short-term and long-term goals. Sometimes you can get free advice from strength and conditioning coaches that are around some of the programs you officiate at during the season.

Some things are essential for you to be successful in your endeavor to maintain a healthy conditioned body:

- Medical clearance to carry out the exercise you have planned.
- Identify short- and long-term goals.
- Identify your strengths and weaknesses.
- Good nutrition.
- Adequate sleep.
- Enjoy the routine of exercise, though at first you may not.

The following are some general guidelines in regards to the type of exercise you should do:

- Cardio exercises, 30 minutes – 5 days a week.
- Flexibility exercises, 20 minutes – 5 days a week.
- Strengthening, 20 minutes – 2-3 days a week.
- Include some balancing exercises in this process as well.

Or, if this is too difficult to carry out, then a plan that consists of either 150 minutes of moderate exercise per week or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise per week may be more obtainable.

A good resource website is: mayoclinic.com/health/fitness/MY00396.

Good luck to all and if you cannot meet these goals immediately, just do something to get you started even if it is just a few minutes. Over time it should become enjoyable again as you see some progress. Remember, healthy body means healthy mind. No other sport requires the precision and attention that baseball does, so both mind and body must be in good shape both for you and for the game.
Ruling Catcher Obstruction

The rules committee added a note involving obstruction by the catcher: “The catcher, without the ball in his possession, has no right to block the pathway of the runner attempting to score. The baseline belongs to the runner and the catcher should be there only when he is fielding the ball or when he already has the ball in his hand. If a fielder is about to receive a thrown ball and if the ball is in flight toward and near enough to the fielder so he must occupy his position to receive the ball, he may be considered ‘in the act of fielding’ a ball. It is entirely up to the judgment of the umpire as to whether the fielder is in the act of fielding a ball.”

This note offers a clearer understanding of the specific requirements for obstruction by the position of catcher or players covering home plate. This also improves the safety of both the player covering the plate and the runner during plays at the plate.

Bat Tampering

Tampering with bats has become a concern in collegiate baseball. Coaches and players will not be allowed to roll the bat surface to give the bat extra pop when the ball hits the bat. The penalty for attempting to use an illegal bat has changed as well. The concern is that the competitive equality and fair play would be thrown out.

The new language to the penalty says if a bat that has been flattened or altered to improve performance, it is an illegal bat. If such an illegal bat is detected before the first pitch, the batter shall be called out and the bat shall be removed from the game. If an illegal bat is detected after the first pitch, legal or illegal, the batter shall be declared out and baserunners shall not advance as a result of a batted ball. The bat shall be removed from the contest, whereas before if there was an illegal bat found, the batter would go back to the dugout and choose a new bat with no further penalty before the first pitch.

The rules committee also added new language in this area: “There shall be no external attachment(s) to any part of the bat and no data collection or transmission device externally attached or embedded within any part of the baseball bat.”
Interview with Randy Bruns

Q: What was the most significant rule change heading into the coming season?
A: Well, the most significant one — even though it doesn’t appear to be, but we’re starting to get a lot of questions about — is just kind of re-establishing the difference between a windup position and a set position for pitching. It doesn’t seem like a major change when we just put in the fact that in the windup you have to have your chest and shoulders square to the plate. It does make quite a difference between what some people were starting to do. It started when pitchers were allowed to position their free foot in front of the pivot foot. So now all of a sudden you’ve got people turning and almost facing toward third base, but saying that they’re in a windup. And it became very difficult, especially when there was a runner on third base only, to know whether somebody was actually going to stretch or whether they were in a windup. And so now we’re just trying to make it a little bit more clear again, more obvious whether you’re in a windup or a set position. Another one that’s going to be a little bit different for some people is that one where it’s “catch-and-carry,” where you can’t now step or fall into an out-of-play area if you make a catch of a fly ball. Before we’ve had the rule where if you’re over by a dugout, for instance, you could catch a ball and step into a dugout, and as long as you didn’t fall, you were still in play. And then, of course, you had all the different ground rules about whether you could throw out of a dugout or not. Some places you could and some places you couldn’t. Or you had the situation where if the catcher was trying to catch a pop foul, if he was sliding intentionally to catch it and then slid into a dugout, was that considered falling? Well, so you had to decide whether that was the case.

And now just to make the ground rules consistent, you can make a catch, but if then you step into a dead-ball area and there are runners, then everybody is going to move up a base.

Q: What is an official warning?
A: We’re really trying to change the culture because baseball is one of those sports where we don’t have a 15-yard penalty like football. We don’t have a technical foul like in basketball. And the baseball culture is, if a coach doesn’t agree with a call, we allow him to come out onto the field to question the call. The point being, this is college baseball, this isn’t professional baseball. However, we all know that people are competitive and sometimes emotions are going to get a little high. At some point in time, you can hopefully give somebody a warning and say basically that same language that’s in the rule, ‘Coach, if you continue, you’ll give me no choice but to eject you from the game.’ Okay, now we’ve kind of drawn the line and hopefully given a chance to kind of catch a breath and realize that you probably should wrap up that conversation. And anything beyond that, then you’d be subject to a penalty. Hopefully we can eliminate that before it gets to the point where there’s an ejection or too much profane language, all that kind of stuff that we know takes place. The purpose is, to standardize it just a little bit to say, okay, this is your official warning, and that’s why the language. George (Drouches) was a big proponent of putting that language directly in there as a definition. But we are going to spend some time working on that with both the coaches association and the NCAA, and our training as well.

Q: Bat tampering. Why was this rule added?
A: There are websites that were brought to our attention that players could send their bat in and get them altered to increase the distance factor from hitting a ball. They also can remove the end cap of the bat and do something to the inside of the bat depending on the kind of model that would change certainly the way that the bat was manufactured. It’s almost impossible to detect that unless you were going to retest the bat.

Prior to the College World Series, the bats were tested to see whether they are flattened or no longer meet the established guidelines. We had some bats that had to be removed from the College World Series this year because they were flat because they were just overused. In the past, if a student-athlete came up to the plate with a bat that was altered, if the pitch hadn’t been thrown, there was no penalty. Now, the batter will be called out.
Test Yourself

In each of the following, you are given a question or play situation and several possible answers. You are to decide which answer is correct using the 2017-18 NCAA rules.

1. R3, two outs. The batter hits a ground ball to F4. His throw is off-line pulling F3 into the running lane in front of first base. F3 and batter-runner (B/R) collide as F3 is reaching for the throw. The collision is within the three-foot runners lane. The B/R misses first base because of the collision and advances on to second base on the bad throw. R3 scores on the play. The defense properly appeals that the B/R missed first base.
   a. R3 is declared out. B/R is awarded first base.
   b. “Time” is called. R3 is awarded home and the B/R is awarded first base.
   c. B/R is declared out. R3 returns to third base.
   d. The ball is live and in play.

2. R1 is stealing on a 1-1 count. The batter interferes with the catcher's throw that is attempting to prevent the steal. F6 catches the throw but R1 stops short of second base and a rundown ensues. R1 is finally tagged out by F3.
   a. The play stands. As long as the runner is tagged out on the play, the interference is disregarded and all action is allowed.
   b. “That's interference” should have been called the moment the interference occurred, but if the catcher's initial throw does not retire the runner, “Time” is called and the B/R is declared out.
   c. “That's interference” should have been called the moment the interference occurred. Then, if the catcher's initial throw does not retire the runner, “Time” is called and the B/R is declared out.
   d. “Time” should have been called the moment the interference occurred and the B/R immediately declared out.

3. R2, no outs. B2 hits a hard line drive at F4. R2, not tagging up, sprints to third base. The ball bounces off F4's glove towards F6, who catches it before it hits the ground. F6 runs over and tags second base to appeal that R2 failed to retouch. Meanwhile, B1 makes it to first base safely.
   a. Legal catch, B2 is out and R2 is out.
   b. Illegal catch, B2 and R2 are both safe.
   c. B2 is out on the catch. R2 is safe at third base since F4 had originally touched the ball but did not end up actually catching it.
   d. Call “time” and check with your partner(s) to make sure that you are interpreting the rule correctly and then call the batter “out” but allow R2 to remain at third base.

4. The bases are loaded with two outs. B6 hits a hard liner past the third baseman. The ball hits the third base umpire and deflects toward the shortstop. R3 crosses the plate before the B/R is thrown out at first base by a great throw by F6.
   a. Great plays are always rewarded.
   b. R3 scores because the ball is dead when it hits the umpire. The batter is awarded first base.
   c. R3 does not score because the ball remains live once it goes past a defensive player and then hits an umpire.
   d. R3 scores but the ball remains live. If R3 crosses the plate before F6's throw retires the B/R, the run is scored. This is a “time” play.

5. The pitcher is also serving as the designated hitter. When his team is on defense, the head coach comes out to make a pitching change.
   a. The pitching change does not affect the pitcher’s status as DH.
   b. The new pitcher automatically becomes the new DH.
   c. The coach must indicate the pitcher’s status before making the change, similar to what is required of a double-switch.
   d. The coach must indicate the pitcher’s status before reaching the dugout or the pitcher may not move to a defensive position or have the pitcher remain as DH.

6. With the bases loaded and no outs, B9 hits a ground ball to the hole at shortstop. Speedy R3 scores easily before F6 fields the ball and throws to F4 for the force out. F4 has no chance of retiring B9 at first base. R1’s raised leg makes contact with F4 at thigh level.
   a. R1 is ejected for the illegal slide.
   b. There is no penalty.
   c. The force play slide rule applies; R1 and B9 are out. R2 and R3’s advance is legal.
   d. The force play slide rule applies; R1 and B9 are out. R2 and R3 return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.

7. After a close play at first base that went against the offensive team, the assistant coach is ejected for arguing the umpire's call.
   a. The assistant coach is suspended for an additional two games plus the game from which he was ejected.
   b. The assistant coach and the head coach
are suspended for an additional game.

\(a\). The assistant coach is ejected from the present contest and receives an additional one game suspension from the team’s next regularly scheduled contest.

\(b\). The assistant coach is ejected from the present game but is eligible to participate in the team’s next contest.

\(c\). This is coach interference. The ball is legally touched base at the time of the interference.

\(d\). This is coach interference. The ball is dead immediately and R2 is declared out. All other runners return to the last legally touched base at the time of the interference.

\(8\). The 6th inning begins with the home team leading 8-7. With two outs, the visiting team scores three runs on a home run. Immediately after the batter-runner touches home plate, to complete his home run, the stadium lights fail and the game cannot continue.

\(a\). Under any circumstance, the game reverts to the last completed full inning.

\(b\). Under any circumstance, the game reverts to the last completed inning unless the conference had adopted the halted game rule or the coaches had agreed to the halted game rule prior to the start of the contest.

\(c\). The game is a suspended game without the halted game provision being agreed to prior to the start of the contest or having been adopted by the conference.

\(d\). Absent the halted game provision, the umpires must wait a minimum of one hour before declaring the game a complete game.

\(9\). R1, R2, one out. B3 hits a ball into the gap in right center. F8 fields the ball and throws back toward the infield. F4 fields the ball and relays to third. R2 is held up late between third and home by his coach. He slips as he tries to stop and makes contact with the third-base coach. R2 then gets up and scrambles back to third, where R1 is already standing. B3 is standing on second at the conclusion of the play.

\(a\). Coach interference can only occur when the coach contacts the runner, not when the runner contacts the coach. The ball is live and in play.

\(b\). This is coach interference. The ball is dead immediately and R2 is declared out. All other runners return to the last legally touched base at the time of the interference.

\(c\). This is coach interference. The ball is dead immediately and R2 is declared out. All other runners return to the last legally touched base at the time of the interference.

\(10\). R1, one out. B2 bunts the ball along the first-base foul line. As B2 runs to first, he intentionally kicks the ball, which is on foul ground. The plate umpire has determined that the ball did not have a chance to become fair. True or False: B2 is ruled out and R1 is returned to first. Any time a batter-runner intentionally deflects the course of a batted ball, he is ruled out.

\(a\). True

\(b\). False.

\(11\). With R1 on first who is breaking on the pitch and a 2-2 count, B3 squares to bunt and F5 charges. B3 then straightens up and swings. The tipped ball deflects off the catcher’s mitt, high into the air and into F5’s glove for a catch. R1 advances to second as F5 fires to first base.

\(a\). Foul ball, no catch, the ball is dead and R1 returns to first.

\(b\). Strike three; B3 is out, R1 remains at second.

\(c\). B3 is out on the caught fly ball, R1 is out when F5 makes a legal appeal.

\(12\). With R1 on first, B2 singles to center. R1 rounds second and heads for third, but changes his mind. F8’s throw to F6 is in time to trap R1 in a rundown. After several exchanges between F5 and F6, R1 makes a desperate attempt to get back to second, where F4 is covering. On his way back to second, R1 is bumped by F6 while F5 still has the ball. F5’s throw to F4 retires R1 as he dives into second.

\(a\). Obstruction, immediate dead ball, R1 is awarded third.

\(b\). Interference, immediate dead ball, R1 is out.

\(c\). Obstruction, delayed dead ball, R1 is awarded second.

\(d\). Obstruction, delayed dead ball, R1 is awarded third.

\(13\). Which is not true regarding the DH rule?

\(a\). The DH can bat only for the starting pitcher and himself.

\(b\). The DH can bat for any replaced pitcher.

\(c\). The DH can bat in any spot in the lineup.

\(d\). The DH can also be the starting pitcher and stay in the game on offense even after being removed as the pitcher.

\(e\). All the statements are true.

\(14\). The coach of Team A has used all three of his free trips to the mound. In the 9th inning, he leaves the dugout to argue a hit batter with the home plate umpire. When that discussion ends, the coach, who is in fair territory near home plate, turns and yells directions to his pitcher and then returns to the dugout.

\(a\). This is not considered a trip to the mound since the coach was arguing with the home plate umpire.

\(b\). This is considered a trip to the mound and the pitcher must be removed.

\(15\). R2 on second. The batter has just faked a bunt and the count is now 1-1. The catcher is attempting to return the pitch to the pitcher when the return toss hits the batter’s bat and goes into centerfield. R2 attempts to advance, touches third base and advances to the plate where he is thrown out.

\(a\). Interference. Batter is out and R2 returns to 2nd base.

\(b\). No interference. The ball remains live and the result of the play stands.

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**Answers**

1. a – 5-6-c (1)
2. c – 7-11-f (2)
3. a – 2-2; 8-6-a (1)
4. c – 5-6-c (1); 6-1-c Exception (1)
5. d – 7-2-e Penalty
6. d – 8-4
7. c – 2-26
8. b – 5-8-b; 5-9
9. c – 2-50; 3-3-e; 8-5-f
10. b – 2-51; 7-11-o
11. a – 2-37; 7-8
12. d – 8-3-e Note
13. e – 7-2
14. b – 9-4-a-2
15. b – 7-11-f Note
Advancement of Forced Winning Run

The rules committee added the following: “When the winning run is scored in the last half-inning of a regulation game, or in the last half-inning of an extra inning game, as the result of a base on balls, hit batter or any other play with the bases full which forces the batter and all other runners to advance without liability of being put out, the umpire shall not declare the game ended until the runner forced to advance from third has touched home plate and the batter-runner has touched first base.”

The exception will be made if fans rush onto the field and physically prevent the runner from touching home plate or the batter-runner from touching first base. In such cases, the umpires shall award the runner the necessary bases with no appeal allowed.

This now allows umpires to simplify the administration of game-ending bases loaded situations to allow umpires to ensure that only the batter-runner and the runner on third base have touched the next base safely.

Fielder, Runner Tangle

In the event of a wild throw during a steal attempt, if the ball is misplayed by the fielder and if the runner and fielder get tangled up, the fielder is restricted from any further hindrance after the initial contact. This clarifies that the initial entanglement of the runner and fielder is not obstruction, but any hindrance after the initial entanglement would constitute obstruction.

Before each play, you give or echo the rotation signals with your partner. However, before you give them, run through your head where you should head on each possible batted ball. For example, with runners on first and second in a two-umpire game, the plate umpire must know that he will go to third on a caught fly ball to the outfield. That is what is signaled between partners. However, short of that, he needs to know that on a base hit, he needs to be ready for a play at the plate and on a ground ball, to watch for illegal slides and to back up his partner if needed on a pulled foot or swipe tag. By thinking about it in advance, you can react more quickly to the play.
The baseball rules committee added a new penalty for a substitute head coach who is ejected from the game. When the head coach has been ejected and is replaced by a substitute head coach, the substitute head coach has all the duties, rights and responsibilities accorded to the original head coach. However, should the substitute head coach be ejected, they shall serve a one-game suspension in addition to his ejection.

While the substitute head coach is entitled to all the rights and duties of a head coach for the purposes of making lineup changes and communicating with the umpires, this administrative ruling is intended to clarify that the suspension penalty required of players and assistant coaches for being ejected is still to be followed even in the event of that person is serving in the capacity of the substitute head coach. This can be found in the penalty misconduct chart in this preseason guide and the rule book.

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**Drouches**

Continued from p. 2

ethics, integrity and relationships of our great game. We are all affected when we lose sight of their importance.

I would like to thank all who participate in our Baseball Umpire Program; much appreciation as well to the Conference Coordinators for their accountable efforts in aligning their staffs to the national program and for their passion and commitment to high-quality umpiring.

To all coaches, coordinators, advisors and umpires, best wishes for a superb 2017 season. All I ask is that all stakeholders enforce the rules written, take care of business and respect the game of college baseball.

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**Halted Game Procedures**

If both teams agree to use the halted game procedure prior to the start of a nonconference contest and the contest cannot be finished, the unfinished game becomes a “no contest” if the game has not met the conditions of a regulation game.

In the past, an approved ruling contradicted with other language in the rules and this has been changed. This additional language established that if the a game meets the definition of a regulation game, even if the game has been agreed to be played under the halted-game rule, it would not revert to a no contest. If all other efforts have been made to finish a halted game but it cannot be completed, it would be a regulation game if the conditions in Rule 5-8 have been met.
Pitching Revisions

Windup Position (9-1-a)

The new rule requires the pitcher to stand with his chest and shoulders generally facing the batter, with the pivot foot on or in front of and touching the pitchers’ plate with the other foot free. The free foot can be in front, on or behind the pitching plate. The added language requires the pitcher to face the batter with the chest and shoulders allowing the baserunners and umpires to have a clear determination if the pitcher is in the windup or set position. There were too many pitchers confusing umpires and runners at third trying to figure out if the pitcher was in the windup or set position.

Pivot Foot (9-1-a-7 and 8)

New language to the pitching rule states, “A pitcher shall not jump or push forward off the pitcher’s plate with the pivot foot and maintain consistent contact with the ground with the pivot foot without a second push-off from the ground. This addresses the situation when the pitcher gains an advantage by pushing off a second time closer to home plate.

Distracting Tattoos (9-2-h)

Added language to Rule 9-2-h involving distracting tattoos. If a pitcher has tattoos that the batter or umpire consider distracting, the pitcher must legally cover the tattoos in a manner that meets the requirements of all pitching rules and uniforms.

 catch & carry

If a fielder legally catches a ball in live territory and steps or falls into out-of-play territory, the ball is dead and each runner, other than the batter, will advance one base without the liability to be put out. This will reduce the potential safety issues that can arise with plays that continue into out-of-play areas and allow for consistency of ground rules.

Momentary Adjustment (9-3-h)

A pitcher may momentarily adjust the ball in the glove and separate the hands so long as it is prior to taking a legal pitching position. This provides clarification of what constitutes a balk or illegal pitch.

Permissible Warmup (9-4-a-AR.6)

During a free trip or a timeout to substitute a pitcher, a defensive player may warm up another defensive player, provided it doesn’t delay the game. The players warming up must be in the current lineup and remain in fair territory during the charged conference or timeout. This allows the new defensive player to warm up while the pitcher is throwing his warm up pitches. Other defensive players should remain on the field so the game can resume after the timeout is finished.

Catch & Carry

If a fielder legally catches a ball in live territory and steps or falls into out-of-play territory, the ball is dead and each runner, other than the batter, will advance one base without the liability to be put out. This will reduce the potential safety issues that can arise with plays that continue into out-of-play areas and allow for consistency of ground rules.
Use of Bullpen

During the game, potential substitute pitchers and other players must use the bullpen areas that are designated on the playing field. They may not use another facility or location out of sight and sound of the playing field. Particularly during inclement weather, there is a concern that home teams have an unfair advantage with alternate facilities that are not available to the visiting team.

Alternate Baseball

Umpires will be the sole judge on whether the ball should be checked and should do so if the ball has bounced off equipment or the external parts of the ballpark, such as the fence, wall, dugouts and other equipment. The baseball rules committee recommends that umpires check the ball if it appears to be “discolored, scuffed or otherwise unsuitable for play,” or if the pitcher requests a different ball. It is not necessary to check the ball that is not cleanly caught by the catcher or hits the dirt.

Umpires do not need to routinely check the ball each time a ground ball is hit to the infield or each pitch that is not cleanly caught by the catcher. Weather and field conditions should be a factor in deciding when to check the ball. This helps with maintaining a good pace of play to the game.
Get The Call Right

With technology playing a bigger role in the game of baseball, the rules committee added language to reflect the protocols for replay.

Catch/No Catch Review

Under previous rules, a catch/no catch decision in the infield could not be reviewed with replay; now that play is reviewable. Only under the following situations may an umpire change a no catch to a catch: 1) If there are runner(s) on base. 2) The catch becomes the third out of the inning. 3) At any time with no one on base, and the change affects the batter only.

Changing a call of catch to no catch, the fair batted ball has to have hit into the outfield area beyond the nearest infielder. A line drive hit directly toward an infielder does not meet the requirements for a potential change of the initial call.

This clarifies as to where the outfield begins for purposes of the umpires being permitted to conference or use instant replay.

Replay

Replay may be used during regular-season play. In order to change a call, there has to be indisputable video evidence and the replay must occur before the next pitch or play.

The following plays are reviewable:
- 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 in the outfield or foul territory.
- d. A call of “no catch” can be changed to “catch” within the infield only if it results in a third out with any runners on base, or any time with a batter runner only.
- e. Spectator interference.
- f. Deciding scoring plays at home plate inclusive of collisions (illegal and/or malicious slides) or time plays.

The following are the criteria for using replay during the regular season:
- a. A ruling on the field will only be changed if there is indisputable video evidence to reverse the call. Absent that evidence, the original ruling on the field will stand.
- b. Any use of instant replay must occur before the next pitch or play. If the replay is called for after a game ending play, if must be called before all umpires leave the field of play.
- c. The crew chief will make the determination to use instant replay. There is no “coaches challenge.”

Under the provisions of Getting the Call Right, coaches have the ability to request a conference among the umpires.

- d. The video review area must be on the field level so that umpires must not walk through spectators to view the replay. At least one umpire must remain on the field.
- e. During the video review the defensive team shall maintain their position on the field and may warm-up if desired. Offensive base runners and the on-deck hitter shall maintain their position. Other personnel shall remain in the dugout. Any defensive or offensive conferences will be charged as during any other part of the game.
- f. All equipment should be tested by appropriate personnel before each game.
- g. The final decision may not be argued by either head coach.
- h. If the reversing of a call results in the need for decisions on the placement of base runners, the crew chief shall use his best judgment to determine their locations as if the call had been made correctly (with exception to placement prescribed by rule on catch/no catch reversals).
- i. If a call has been changed, the crew chief, upon returning to the field, will notify both head coaches and the official scorer of the ruling.

This now establishes the parameters for permissive rules to

See “Get The Call Right” p. 15
Ground Rules Procedures

New rules language clarifies that ground rules shall not conflict with playing rules. “A ground rule may be adopted where unusual conditions prevail if agreeable with the visiting team. No ground rule shall conflict with the official playing rules. If both teams don’t agree, ground rules shall be determined by the umpires.”

Ground rules that are in conflict with the playing rules create competitive inequity from facility-to-facility. It’s important to follow the standard ground rules as listed in the rule book.

Get The Call Right
Continued from p. 14

allow the use of video replay where the capabilities are available as a supplement to Appendix E Getting the Call Right. Those institutions that televise or web-stream contests would need field-level monitors or computers available for the umpires to access the video feed.

Call Changes

If a call is to be changed, the umpire shall notify the opposing head coach of the umpire’s decision to change the call before signaling their decision to the press box or crowd. Once the notification is made to the head coach, the calling umpire will signal the final decision. This provides the head coach an explanation prior to an announcement after the umpires have conferenced or used replay review. The baseball rules committee believes that will reduce the potential for additional arguments by coaches of the impacted team.

Permissible Gloves

Every player, with the exception of the catcher, will be allowed to use a glove not more than 13-inches long and eight-inches wide. For consistency in purchasing, permitting this size would allow student-athletes to purchase a fielder’s glove without concern that it is larger than permitted.
Hit by the Pitch

The baseball rules committee amended the wording of the rule to read: “A batter may not make a movement to intentionally get hit by the pitch and must avoid being hit whenever possible.” This is intended to reduce the number of batters allowing themselves to be intentionally hit or moving into pitches.

If in the umpire’s judgment, the batter is unable to make an attempt to avoid the pitch, the batter will be awarded first base and all other runners advance one base if forced.

Respect and Integrity

Continued from p. 1

Sidwell, chair of NCAA Division I Baseball Committee.

It’s an art form to watch the best umpires manage a baseball game and to see how they keep the game running smoothly and without effort.

“Coaches and umpires need to be professional at all times. We have to be role models to the student-athletes,” said Craig Keilitz, executive director of the American Baseball Coaches Association.

Good umpires command respect with their actions and the way they come across with their mannerisms and disposition. At the end of the day, let’s respect each other, our roles and the game.