MEMORANDUM

November, 2014

TO: NCAA Division I Conference Baseball Administrators, Conference Baseball Umpire Assignors and Director of Athletics at Independent Baseball Playing Institutions.

FROM: Dave Heeke, chair
NCAA Division I Baseball Committee.

George Drouches, national coordinator
NCAA Baseball Umpires.


The NCAA Division I Baseball Committee and Baseball Umpire Program (BUP) are committed to improving umpiring during the regular season, as well as the NCAA 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.

We would like to remind you of umpire assignment requirements and other points of emphasis pertaining to conference and non-conference games:

1. Conferences are required to have their umpire coordinator directly assign umpires or select some individual(s) (excluding baseball coaches within the conference) to directly assign umpires for conference and non-conference games, and set 50 percent of a school’s non-conference schedule as the maximum number of games an individual umpire may work during the season. Schools that do not play as part of a Division I conference are required to select a conference within their region to assign umpires for all their home non-conference games. All non conference assignors should report to the conference coordinator and not to individual institutions. All non-conference assignments must be made by or approved by the conference umpire coordinator.

2. A conference may not employ scratch procedures in the assignment of officials to its conference or non-conference games. Scratch procedures are those that provide coaches, either individually or collectively, with the
direct or indirect authority to hire, retain or affect the assignment or release of any officials. Conference coordinators are encouraged to solicit, either orally or in writing, coaches’ evaluations of officials, noting that this information would be treated as advisory only and that complete control of the officiating staff remains vested in the conference office.

3. It is recommended that conference coordinators, rather than third parties, be used to assign umpires in non-conference neutral site games. Many such events occur early in the season at neutral sites, however, use of conference coordinators to assign officials will help ensure quality umpiring at such events inasmuch as these games may be factors in the evaluation and selection of teams for the championship.

4. Before the start of the season (championship segment), head baseball coaches at NCAA Division I institutions are required to view an NCAA baseball rules video or attend an NCAA umpire officiating clinic. If an institution’s head baseball coach is unable to or chooses not to attend a clinic or view the video, the institution is required to send a full-time coaching staff member to one of the four umpire clinics.

5. It is also highly recommended that at least three umpires be used for all Division I conference and non-conference games. While there are certainly economic factors involved in using only two umpires for non-conference games, it is important that a minimum level of umpiring be used in all Division I baseball games and that there be a minimum level of consistency in umpire crews (as some conferences are beginning to use four umpires more often).

We hope that this information reminds all of these important policies and points of emphasis for the upcoming season. We look forward to working with all of you again this spring.

RLB:kg

cc: Baseball Umpire Program Umpire Subcommittee