

TIMES HAVE **REALLY** CHANGED

Did you umpire college baseball in the 1960's, 1970's, 1980's?

I did. I umpired in Southern California.

There have been **huge** changes involving all aspects of college baseball umpiring since I started in 1966.

Game fees in 1966 (all games two umpires): Varsity - \$12.50 per umpire, Freshman - \$10.00 for the plate "real" umpire. The school would provide a volunteer to umpire the bases. No mileage and no per diem for umpires. Umpires did not travel outside their local area.

Umpires were not required to be a member of an association or attend a formal clinic, camp, school or any type of formal umpire training. High school umpires were required to join an association which taught high school rules and two umpire mechanics. Most of the college umpires joined the high school association because they were also umpiring high school baseball. So umpires did receive mechanics training.

Schools did not provide dressing rooms, so umpires had to bring their own beverages and food. Umpires had to change their clothes in the parking lot. This created numerous problems, especially after games as players, coaches and fans would yell obscenities at the umpires if call(s) during the game did not go their way. This was part of the reason the post-participation ejection rule was put in the rule book.

Applying rules was the biggest problem for college umpires. Nobody had a NCAA rule book. College umpires used the professional rule book.

Umpire assignments were made by the Head Coach of each school. As an umpire, no matter which two schools were playing, sometimes we heard "homer" coming out of a dugout.

Moving into the 1970's & 1980's college umpiring started to change. Some coaches gave their home schedule to a local umpire to assign his games. This created the "good 'ol boys club" whereby the umpire assignor would assign his "buddies." In some areas of the country, local associations were formed to train and assign umpires. The NCAA baseball rules book was now the rules all college umpires enforced.

In the 1980's schools started to travel more. The rules became more of a problem because not all umpires in the United States were using the NCAA rules book, receiving any rules instruction or reading a rule book. Coaches and umpires were not happy with the way college baseball umpiring was going because rules were being interpreted and enforced differently throughout the country.

In 1989 the NCAA created a National Baseball Umpire Program, naming Jon Bible National Coordinator of Umpires. Since that time, conferences have become involved with college baseball umpiring.

Today most college games are assigned by conferences using three umpires with some conferences using four umpires. Umpires are receiving increased game fees, airline fare, mileage, per diem, a dressing room, beverages and, at some schools, sandwiches or a meal.

Yes, times have **really** changed, for the good.....enjoy what the National Baseball Umpire Program has done for you.