



NCAA Playing Rules Summary: Artificial Crowd Noise
(Updated: January 14, 2021)

Sport	Rules Committee Decision	Rules Interpretation/Waiver
Baseball	Approved	<p>Piped-in artificial crowd noise is approved by the Baseball Rules Committee for the 2021 season with the following stipulations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Items such as artificial noisemakers, air horns and music may not be used as artificial crowd noise during play;2. All rules in Appendix B, Section B Audio and LED or LED/Matrix Boards must be adhered to, including when music, noise, chants, etc. may be used and when they must be stopped;3. The umpires have the authority to regulate and/or eliminate the artificial crowd noise in the event they determine that it is interfering with the conduct of the game; and4. Conferences are encouraged to approve the crowd noise being used by its institutions.
Men's Basketball	Approved	<p>Artificial Noise in the Arena – Piped-in artificial crowd noise is approved by the Men's Basketball Rules Committee for the 2020-21 season with the following stipulations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The decibel level shall not exceed 85db and shall remain constant when the ball is live.2. Artificial noisemakers such as "Thundersticks", whistles, bells or horns may not be part of the artificial crowd noise.3. Bands, amplified music or artificial noisemakers are permitted only during timeouts, intermissions and instant replay reviews by officials.4. No loudspeakers or amplifiers shall be placed in close proximity to team benches.5. Artificial crowd noise shall not disrupt the officials' ability to manage the game. The referee is authorized to regulate or eliminate artificial crowd noise in the event that the referee determines that the noise is interfering with the reasonable conduct of the game.6. No artificial boos or other negative crowd reactions shall be permitted.7. None of these restrictions shall prevent a conference's or institution's media partner(s) from adding artificial crowd noise to their broadcasts provided it is inaudible within the facility where the game is being played.

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<p>Women's Basketball</p>	<p>Approved</p>	<p>Piped-in artificial crowd noise is approved by the Women's Basketball Rules Committee for the 2020-21 season with the following stipulations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That artificial noisemakers, such as but not limited to, "Thundersticks", cowbells, whistles, horns, etc., may not be a part of the crowd noise; 2. Bands, amplified music, or sound effects are still only permitted during dead-ball periods; 3. The artificial crowd noise may not drown out the officials' whistles or disrupt the official's management of the game; 4. That the decibel level, not to exceed 85db, must remain constant throughout the game when the ball is live; 5. No loudspeakers or amplifiers shall be placed in close proximity to the bench areas. 6. No negative crowd reactions or artificial sounds shall be permitted. 7. The referee shall have the authority to regulate and/or eliminate the artificial crowd noise in the event they determine that it is interfering with the conduct of the game. 8. Conferences are encouraged to approve the crowd noise being used by its institutions and it is recommended that all institutions' artificial noise be similar. 9. This does not prevent a conference's or institution's media partner(s) from adding crowd noise to their broadcast provided it is inaudible within the facility.
<p>Women's Bowling</p>	<p>Not addressed</p>	
<p>Cross Country/ Track and Field</p>	<p>Not addressed</p>	
<p>Football</p>	<p>Approved</p>	<p>Artificial crowd noise, by conference policy or mutual consent of the institutions, is allowed. The noise level must be consistent throughout the game for both teams. However, all current rules remain in effect dealing with bands, music and other sounds. When the snap is imminent, the band/music must stop playing. As with all administrative rules, the referee may stop the game and direct game management to adjust.</p>
<p>Men's and Women's Ice Hockey</p>	<p>Approved</p>	<p>Ambient crowd noise that is created by game management staff through the public address system is not addressed in the rules specifically. The committee</p>

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		is communicating this to conferences for their awareness and management. Bands and artificial noisemakers are addressed in the rules and are not allowed to be used during play.
Men's Lacrosse	Denied	Artificial crowd noise is not permitted during live play.
Women's Lacrosse	Approved	<p>Piped-in artificial crowd noise is approved by the Women's Lacrosse Rules Committee for the 2021 season with the following stipulations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bands, amplified music, or artificial noisemakers are permitted only during pregame, postgame, timeouts, and intermissions. 2. Artificial noisemakers including, but not limited to, whistles, bells, and horns may not be part of the artificial crowd noise. 3. The noise level must be consistent throughout the game for both teams. 4. No artificial boos or other negative crowd reactions shall be permitted. 5. No loudspeakers or amplifiers shall be placed in close proximity to team benches. 6. Artificial crowd noise shall not disrupt the officials' ability to manage the game. The head official is authorized to regulate or eliminate artificial crowd noise in the event that the head official determines that the noise is interfering with the reasonable conduct of the game. 7. Conferences are encouraged to approve the crowd noise being used by its institutions and it is recommended that all institutions' artificial noise be similar. 8. None of these restrictions shall prevent a conference's or institution's media partner(s) from adding artificial crowd noise to their broadcasts provided it is inaudible where the game is being played.
Men's and Women's Soccer	Approved	<p>Piped-in artificial crowd noise is approved by the Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee for the 2020-21 season with the following stipulations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Items listed in Rule 5.6.9, including whistles and air horns, may not be a part of the crowd noise; 2. The artificial crowd noise may not drown out the officials' whistles or disrupt the officials' management of the game;

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		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Amplified music, as outlined in A.R. 5.6.9.a, is still only permitted during pregame, period intervals, and anytime the clock is stopped and the ball is not in play; 4. The referee shall have the authority to regulate and/or eliminate the artificial crowd noise in the event he/she determines that it is interfering with the conduct of the game; and 5. Conferences are encouraged to approve the crowd noise being used by its institutions.
Softball	Approved	<p>Piped-in artificial crowd noise is approved by the Softball Rules Committee for the 2021 season with the following stipulations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Items listed in Rule 5.11, including artificial noisemakers, air horns and electronic amplifiers, may not be part of the artificial crowd noise; 2. Bands are still only permitted to play while the ball is dead as outlined in Rule 5.13; 3. All rules in Appendix G regarding Video, Audio or Matrix Boards must be adhered to, including when music, noise, cheers, etc. may be used and when they must be stopped; 4. The umpires have the authority to regulate and/or eliminate the artificial crowd noise in the event they determine that it is interfering with the conduct of the game; and 5. Conferences are encouraged to approve the crowd noise being used by its institutions.
Men's and Women's Swimming and Diving	Not addressed	
Women's Volleyball	Approved	<p>Piped-in artificial crowd noise is approved by the Women's Volleyball Rules Committee for the 2020-21 season with the following stipulations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That artificial noisemakers, such as but not limited to, "Thundersticks", cowbells, whistles, horns, etc., may not be a part of the crowd noise; 2. Bands, amplified music, or sound effects are still only permitted during dead-ball periods; 3. The artificial crowd noise may not drown out the officials' whistles or disrupt the official's management of the game;

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		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. That the decibel level, not to exceed 85db, must remain constant throughout the game when the ball is live; 5. No loudspeakers or amplifiers shall be placed in close proximity to the bench areas. 6. No negative crowd reactions or artificial sounds shall be permitted. 7. The referee shall have the authority to regulate and/or eliminate the artificial crowd noise in the event they determine that it is interfering with the conduct of the game. 8. Conferences are encouraged to approve the crowd noise being used by its institutions and it is recommended that all institutions' artificial noise be similar. 9. This does not prevent a conference's or institution's media partner(s) from adding crowd noise to their broadcast provided it is inaudible within the facility.
Men's and Women's Water Polo	Not addressed	
Wrestling	Approved	<p>During the 2020-21 wrestling season, the Wrestling Rules Committee has approved piped-in artificial crowd noise and/or music that is amplified by the host game management to be utilized while wrestling is taking place with the following stipulations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The host game management must ensure the decibel level does not exceed 85db; 2. Even when the sound level is at or below 85db, the referee shall have the authority to regulate and/or eliminate the artificial crowd noise and/or amplified music in the event they determine that it is interfering with the conduct of the event; 3. Live music, including bands, is not allowed while wrestling is taking place and artificial noise, noisemakers or music, by individuals other than the event management staff, is prohibited; and 4. Conferences are encouraged to approve the crowd noise being used by its institutions.