



REPORT OF THE  
NCAA BASEBALL RULES COMMITTEE  
JULY 9-11, 2024, ANNUAL MEETING

**ACTION ITEMS.**

**1. Legislative items.**

- None.

**2. Nonlegislative items.** The NCAA Baseball Rules Committee approved the following rules change proposals for the 2025 and 2026 seasons. The Baseball Rules Committee requests approval from the NCAA Playing Rules Oversight Panel for the following items:

**a. First, Second and Third Bases- Double First Base (Rule 1-7-b).**

(1.) Recommendation. To permit the use of the double first bases in post-season competition.

“b. The double first base may be used during regular-season competition and post-season competition.”

(2.) Effective date. Immediately.

(3.) Rationale. To allow the Division I, Division II and Division III Baseball Committees the option to permit the use of the double first base in their respective NCAA Championships.

(4.) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5.) Student-athlete impact. None.

**b. Bat Testing (Rule 1-12-g).**

(1.) Recommendation. To require bat testing to be conducted each day of competition (or prior to the first game of a double-header.).

(2.) Effective date. Immediately.

(3.) Rationale. To ensure compliant bats are being used during NCAA competition.

(4.) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5.) Student-athlete impact. None.

**c. Bat Testing – Bat Sticker (Rule 1-12-g).**

- (1.) Recommendation. To require the bat testing sticker(s) for day of competition of each team be placed on the lineup card given to the umpire.
- (2.) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3.) Rationale. To allow the umpire to easily identify the bat sticker being used for that day of competition.
- (4.) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5.) Student-athlete impact. None.

**d. The Bat (Rule 1-12-e).**

- (1.) Recommendation. Add the Remove the discoloration of the ball language from Rule 1-12-e.  
  
“e. It is mandatory that all bats have an identification mark 18 inches from the end of the handle. No foreign substance ~~that will in any way discolor the ball~~ may be added to the surface of the bat beyond 18 inches from the end of the handle.
- (2.) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3.) Rationale. The rule change would now include clear substances that may not discolor that ball but any foreign substance added to the barrel of the bat beyond 18 inches from the end of the handle.
- (4.) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5.) Student-athlete impact. None.

**e. Ejection and Post-Participation Ejection (Rule 2-26-e).**

- (1.) Recommendation. To separate the pitcher and relief pitcher suspensions served after an ejection. A player listed as the starting pitcher will remain at a four-game suspension and a relief pitcher will now serve a two-game suspension following an ejection.
- (2.) Effective date. Immediately.

(3.) Rationale. The current rule specifies that a pitcher who is ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct should be amended to distinguish between a relief pitcher and a starting pitcher. A relief pitcher operates and are available to participate in a manner more similar to a position player, who is only suspended for one-game for an ejection due to unsportsmanlike conduct.

(4.) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5.) Student-athlete impact. None.

**f. Positions of the Offensive Team (Rule 5-2-f Note 1).**

(1.) Recommendation. To amend the language to Rule 5-2-f Note 1 as follows:

“Note 1: Video and communication equipment used to transmit information between coaches, coaches and players, scouts or other team personnel shall not be allowed for intercollegiate competition. Video or electronic data used for scouting, training or teaching purposes may be recorded from any unmanned camera location. No video or electronic data may be transmitted from manned or unmanned sources for scouting, training or coaching purposes during the contest. An exclusively one-way electronic communication device ~~from the dugout to the field~~ from the dugout, the coaches’ boxes or a position player on the field for the purpose of relaying the pitch or play call is permitted. The use of an in-ear communication device shall be limited to the defensive position of the catcher.”

(2.) Effective date. Immediately.

(3.) Rationale. The rule change would allow for play calling on the offensive side to occur outside of the dugout but still within designated areas.

(4.) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5.) Student-athlete impact. None.

**g. Positions of the Offensive Team (Rule 5-2-f Penalty).**

(1.) Recommendation. To amend the language for Rule 5-2-f Penalty as follows:

~~PENALTY for f.—The umpire first should warn the violator(s). If the violator(s) does not immediately comply with the rule, the individual(s) shall be removed from the~~

~~stands or shall receive a post-participation ejection.~~ The individual violator(s) and the head coach shall be ejected from the contest.

(2.) Effective date. Immediately.

(3.) Rationale. The rule change increases the penalty to align with the NCAA baseball code of ethics and the expectation of compliance wholeheartedly with the intent and spirit of the rules.

(4.) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5.) Student-athlete impact. None.

**h. Fight Rule (Rule 5-16-c).**

(1.) Recommendation. To amend Rule 5-16-c as follows:

“c. Team personnel leaving their position to participate in or incite a verbal altercation or physical confrontation (e.g., pushing, shoving, bumping or a fight (see 5-16-a) shall include players, coaches and team personnel). The position of various team members is determined by where the individual is located (e.g. dugout, bullpen, coaching box, on base, at bat, defensive position) at the time a confrontational situation develops. Team personnel who have not left the bench area (e.g. apron of the dugout) or bullpen area shall be considered to have remained in their position. Players on the field will not be penalized who are judged to not to be participating in escalating or inciting the altercation.”

(2.) Effective date. Immediately.

(3.) Rationale. To eliminate the existing ambiguity within the "fight rule" to ensure a more consistent understanding and application as described to eliminate undue ejections and suspensions for players who do not participate or incite a fight. As a result, only players who are deemed to have participated (including through the use of video review, when available) in a physical altercation or confrontation shall be penalized.

(4.) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5.) Student-athlete impact. None.

**i. Batter's-Box Rule (Rules 7-1-d and 7-1-e).**

- (1.) Recommendation. Eliminate the batter's box rule (Rules 7-1-d and 7-1-e) which requires the hitter to stay within the batter's box
- (2.) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3.) Rationale. The rule change aligns with the current action clock and timing requirements.
- (4.) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5.) Student-athlete impact. None.

**j. Batter Becomes Base Runner (Rule 8-2-e Exception).**

- (1.) Recommendation. To amend the language to Rule 8-2-e Exception to as follows:  
  
“Exception—~~If there is catcher's interference on a squeeze play or a steal of home, the batter is awarded first base, the run scores and all other runners advance one base on the balk created by the interference.~~ If, with a runner on third base and trying to score by means of a squeeze play or a steal, the catcher or any other fielder steps on, or in front of home base without possession of the ball, or touches the batter or his bat, the pitcher shall be charged with a balk, the batter shall be awarded first base on the interference and the ball is dead.”
- (2.) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3.) Rationale. A clarification for what is considered stepping in front of home plate during these types of play situations.
- (4.) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5.) Student-athlete impact. None.

**k. Force-Play-Slide Rule (Rule 8-4-c Penalties).**

- (1.) Recommendation. To amend the language to Rule 8-4-c Penalties:  
  
“PENALTIES for (1-5)—(1) Delayed dead ball until the play is completed. With less than two outs, the batter-runner, as well as the interfering runner, shall be declared out and no other runner(s) shall advance.  
(2) With two outs, the interfering runner shall be declared out and no other runner(s) shall advance.

(3) If the runner's slide or collision is flagrant, the runner shall be ejected from the contest."

(2.) Effective date. Immediately.

(3.) Rationale. To allow the play to continue after the call of force-play-slide rule as this is a reviewable play. If this call is overturned it would allow the play at first base on the batter-runner to remain.

(4.) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5.) Student-athlete impact. None.

**l. Pitching Positions (Rule 9-1-a).**

(1.) Recommendation. To amend Rule 9-1-a as follows:

"a. The Windup. The pitcher shall stand facing the batter with their pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate and other foot free. In the windup position, a pitcher is permitted to have their "free" foot on the pitcher's plate, in front of the pitcher's plate, behind the pitcher's plate or off the side of the pitcher's plate. The pitcher may not take a second step toward home plate with either foot in the delivery of the pitch.

From this position, any natural movement associated with the delivery of the ball to the batter commits the pitcher to pitch without interruption or alteration. The pitcher shall not raise either foot from the ground, except that in the actual delivery of the ball to the batter, the pitcher may take one step ~~backward or sideward~~ without gaining ground toward home plate and one step forward toward home plate with the free foot."

(2.) Effective date. Immediately.

(3.) Rationale. To add clarifying language for gaining ground towards home plate.

(4.) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5.) Student-athlete impact. None.

**m. Pitching Violations (Rule 9-2-b Penalty).**

(1.) Recommendation. To amend Rule 9-2-b Penalty as follows:

“PENALTY—With no one on base, if the ball drops or slips out of the hand, intentionally or accidentally, ~~it is no pitch if the ball does NOT cross the foul line. If it does cross the foul line,~~ it is a ball. If there is a runner(s) on base and the ball is dropped, it is a balk.”

(2.) Effective date. Immediately.

(3.) Rationale. To simplify the penalty for the ball being dropped while in contact with the pitcher’s plate and follows the requirements of the pitch clock rule.

(4.) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5.) Student-athlete impact. None.

**n. Pitching Violations-Foreign Substances (Rule 9-2-e Penalty).**

(1.) Recommendation. To amend the penalty for Rule 9.2.e to include the head coach, along with the pitcher, to be ejected from the present contest. (Note: Everyone other than the head coach will have a suspension following the ejection.)

“PENALTY for e. —Eject the pitcher and the head coach from the game. If the pitcher expectorates on their hand, ball or glove or rubs the ball on the glove, person or clothing and, in the judgement of the umpire, the pitcher did not intend to alter the characteristics of the baseball, then the umpire may, at the umpire's discretion, warn the pitcher in lieu of ejecting the pitcher from the game. If the pitcher persists in violating this rule, the umpire shall then eject the pitcher and the head coach from the game.”

(2.) Effective date. Immediately.

(3.) Rationale. The rule change increases the penalty to align with the NCAA baseball code of ethics and the expectation of compliance wholeheartedly with the intent and spirit of the rules.

(4.) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5.) Student-athlete impact. None.

**o. Pitching Violations (Rule 9-2-i).**

(1.) Recommendation. To allow the pitcher to throw unlimited warm-up pitches between innings within 120 seconds.

(2.) Effective date. Immediately.

(3.) Rationale. This rule change provides the pitchers the opportunity to determine the amount of warm-up pitches deemed necessary within the prescribed between-innings time period (120 seconds).

(4.) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5.) Student-athlete impact. None.

**p. Pitching Violations (Rule 9-2-I) Between Innings Clock Protocol (Appendix F).**

(1.) Recommendation. To allow a new or relief pitcher unlimited warm-up pitches within 150 seconds.

*Note: The timer shall begin when a new pitcher who is entering the game, either at the start of an inning or as part of a mid-inning pitching change, crosses the warning track (or otherwise leaves the bullpen area if the bullpen is on the playing field). A pitcher warming-up in the bullpen must immediately leave the bullpen when signaled by the umpire. If the pitcher does not immediately leave the bullpen when signaled, the umpire shall signal for the timer to start.*

(2.) Effective date. Immediately.

(3.) Rationale. This rule change provides relief pitchers the opportunity to determine the amount of warm-up pitches deemed necessary within the prescribed between-innings time period (150 seconds).

(4.) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5.) Student-athlete impact. None.

**q. Removing Pitcher (9-4-b Note 2).**

(1.) Recommendation. To amend Rule 9-4-b Note 2 to allow relief pitchers to warm-up in the bullpen or the game mound in the case of an injury or an ejection

*“Note 2: The relief pitcher, when called from the bullpen by the umpire, must proceed immediately to the mound. Any additional pitches thrown in the bullpen will be subtracted*



*from the eight preparatory pitches permitted on the mound. In the case of an injury or an ejection to the current pitcher, the substitute pitcher may take warm-up pitches from the bullpen or game mound. Should some warm-up pitches be taken from the bullpen and the pitcher has moved to the game mound to complete their warm-up, the relief pitcher change timing protocols shall be followed.*

(2.) Effective date. Immediately.

(3.) Rationale. This rule change provides relief pitchers entering the game the opportunity to determine the location to warm-up (e.g. the game mound or the bullpen) in the case of an injury or an ejection.

(4.) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5.) Student-athlete impact. None.

**r. Pitch/Between Innings Clock Protocol (Appendix F, #9).**

(1.) Recommendation. To amend the time in which the hitter must be alert and ready to hit from 10 seconds to 8 seconds remaining on the pitch clock.

(2.) Effective date. Immediately.

(3.) Rationale. This two-second change promotes the safety of hitters by not requiring them to be alert to the pitcher so early in the sequencing of the 20-second pitch clock.

(4.) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5.) Student-athlete impact. None.

**s. Pitch/Between Innings Clock Protocol (Appendix F, #11).**

(1.) Recommendation. To amend the 20-Second Action Clock Limit language of Appendix F, #11 as follows:

“11. If a pitcher starts a preliminary motion or a motion to deliver the pitch before the batter is alert and ready to hit, the umpire shall call “Time” and issue a warning the first time a pitcher does this. A pitcher shall only receive one (1) warning.

A) With no runner on base, the warning will be assessed and any further violations will result in a ball.

B) With any runner on base, the initial warning is also the reset for that at-bat. Any further violations by that pitcher will result in a ball.”

(2.) Effective date. Immediately.

(3.) Rationale. The rules change addresses situations when a pitcher is starting the preliminary motion or a motion to deliver the pitch before the batter is alert and ready to hit.

(4.) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5.) Student-athlete impact. None.

**t. Pitch/Between Innings Clock Protocol (Appendix F).**

(1.) Recommendation. To allow the following timing rules for pace of play to be permissive by conference rule or mutual agreement prior to the start of the game:

- **Between Batters Clock.** A 30-second timer shall start at the conclusion of the prior play as indicated by the ball being in the possession of the pitcher in the proximity of the mound. In the event the batter/runner ends an at bat on second base and needs to hand protective equipment to a coach, the timer should start when the batter-runner hands his equipment to the coach.

*Note: NCAA rules regarding the stop and enforcement of the pitch clock shall apply (e.g. pitcher must begin motion to pitch prior to expiration of the clock and hitter must be alert to the pitcher with 8 or more seconds remaining).*

- **Mound Visit Clock.** A 30-second timer shall begin when a coach crosses the foul line or when a defensive player leaves their position to visit the pitcher's mound. The home plate umpire shall proceed to the mound when the timer reaches nine (9) seconds. Unless the coach signals for a pitching change, the coach must leave the mound when (or before) the timer expires. If the coach has not left the mound or signaled for a pitching change by the time the clock expires, the umpire shall break up the visit and direct the coach back to the dugout or to signal for a pitching change. If a coach does not immediately leave the mound or signal for a pitching change upon being directed by the home plate umpire, a warning shall be issued for a first offense with a ball automatically awarded to the batter for any subsequent offense.

*Note: The mound visit clock shall not operate when a doctor or trainer accompanies a coach to evaluate a bona fide medical issue. Upon expiration of the clock, the 20-second NCAA pitch clock shall commence.*

- **Offensive Timeout Clock.** A 30-second timer shall begin when an offensive timeout is granted by an umpire to a player or coach. The home plate umpire shall proceed to conclude the timeout when the timer reaches nine (9) seconds. Upon expiration of the clock, unless a substitution has been signaled, any visit must conclude and/or the batter must enter the batter's box. If the visit does not immediately conclude or the batter immediately enter the box upon being directed by the home plate umpire, a warning shall be issued for a first offense, with a strike automatically awarded to the batter for any subsequent offense.

*Note: The offensive timeout clock shall not operate when a doctor or trainer accompanies a coach to evaluate a medical issue.*

(2.) Effective date. Immediately.

(3.) Rationale. To further enhance pace of play within college baseball by cutting time during certain "dead ball" activities which, in turn, allows the rhythms of the game during "live ball" action to remain uninterrupted.

(4.) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5.) Student-athlete impact. None.

**u. Pitch/Between Innings Clock Protocol (Appendix F, #9).**

(1.) Recommendation. To amend the language to make the visible action clock permissive for Division III.

"Effective January 1, 2025, the use of one or more visible clocks will be permissible during the game to enforce all timing rules for Division III."

*Note: All pitch/between innings clock timing requirements shall continue to be followed and enforced during play.*

(2.) Effective date. Immediately.

(3.) Rationale. The potentially burdensome expense for purchasing, installing, operating and staffing the visible action clock, as well as feedback during the original adoption of

the required visible action clock. Permitting the use of the visible clock for institutions that wish to use it is sufficient for the effective application of the playing rule and enforcement of the timing procedures.

(4.) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5.) Student-athlete impact. None.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.**

1. **Welcome and announcements.** Billy O'Conner, chair of the Baseball Rules Committee, welcomed the Committee and invited guests and thanked them for their time.
2. **Review schedule, agenda, committee procedures and Playing Rules Oversight Panel directive.** The rules committee reviewed the meeting schedule, agenda and operations manual, which included the NCAA conflict of interest policy, guidance for committee members regarding meeting reports, notes and email, voting procedures, the federated rules process for Division I, Division II and Division III, principles for rules writing, and experimental playing rules guidelines. The rules committee was reminded of the directive of PROP from 2014. This directive encourages all rules committees to strongly consider providing at least a one-year delay for institutions, particularly those with members from Division II and Division III, before implementing any rules changes that have financial or facility implications.
3. **Approval of 2023 annual meeting and May 6, 2024, videoconference reports.** The reports were approved as written.
4. **NCAA Sport Science Institute Injury Surveillance Presentation.** The rules committee heard a report from the NCAA Sport Science Institute Injury Surveillance and the Datalys Center for Sports Injury Research and Prevention. This report included information on injury rates, injury distributions and injury mechanisms.
5. **Report of the national coordinator of umpires.** The rules committee heard a report from the national coordinator of umpires, which focused on recruiting and retaining umpires, increases in engagement on RQ+, the ejections and suspensions from the 2024 baseball season and the use of video review through the post-season.
6. **Report of the secretary-rules editor.** The rules committee heard a report from the secretary-rules editor, which focused on the clarifications and interpretations from the 2023 and 2024 baseball seasons.
7. **Review of 2022 approved baseball rules changes.** No additional discussion by the rules committee.
8. **Review of 2025 and 2026 proposed rules changes, 2024 rules survey, 2024 rules survey results, committee's feedback and editorial revisions.** The rules committee reviewed and considered several rules proposals as noted above in the Action Items section of this report.
9. **Review of bat testing process and postseason summary.** The committee reviewed the bat testing procedure and the BBCOR compliance process. There were no changes or recommendations moved forward.

- 10. Review of rules changes or experimental rules from the Atlantic Coast Conference, Southeastern Conference, Summit League and the Sun Belt Conference.** The committee reviewed feedback provided by the conferences that used experimental rules during the 2024 season.
- 11. Selection of chair.** The Baseball Rules Committee elected Billy O’Conner, head baseball coach at Xavier University, as chair for a one-year term beginning September 1, 2024.
- 12. Other business.** Outgoing committee members were recognized and thanked for their service to the committee and Association.
- 13. Future meeting and videoconference schedule.** The rules committee is scheduled to meet July 8-10, 2025, for its annual meeting.
- 14. Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 p.m. Eastern time on Thursday, July 11.

*Committee Chair:* Billy O’Conner, Xavier University  
*Staff Liaison(s):* Stanley Broaden, Championships and Alliances, Playing Rules and Officiating

Baseball Rules Committee July 9-11, 2024, Annual Meeting	
<b>Attendees:</b>	
Randy Bruns, secretary-rules editor.	
Tim Corbin, Vanderbilt University.	
Larry Gallo, Jr., University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.	
David Fontaine, Utica University.	
Patrick McGaha, Harding University.	
Billy O’Conner, Xavier University.	
Todd Wilkinson, University of South Carolina Aiken.	
Jesse Woods, Colby College.	
<b>Absentees:</b>	
Alex Gary, Western Carolina University.	
<b>Guests in Attendance:</b>	
George Drouches, national coordinator of umpires.	
Scott Letendre, active umpire.	
<b>NCAA Staff Liaison (or Staff Support of Committee) in Attendance:</b>	
Stanley Broaden and Ben Brownlee.	

<b>Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:</b>
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Adrian Boltz, Dr. Kody Campbell, Avinash Chandran, Lauren Crumley, Greg Johnson, Mallory Mickus and Caleb Vaughn.
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