



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA DIVISION I BASEBALL RULES SUBCOMMITTEE
JULY 13-15, 2026, ANNUAL MEETING**

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- **None.**

2. Nonlegislative items. The NCAA Division I Baseball Rules Subcommittee approved the following rules change recommendations for the 2027 and 2028 seasons and experimental rules for the 2027 season. The Division I Baseball Rules Subcommittee requests approval from the Division I Baseball Oversight Committee:

a. First, Second, and Third Base – Double Base at First Base (Rule 1-7).

(1) Recommendation. Require the use of a double base at first base for regular season and postseason competition. *Exception: Competition held at noninstitutionally owned facilities may use 18-inch square bases.*

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. To provide equal opportunity for both the offensive and defensive players to function in the same approximate area, potentially limit contact at first base between offensive and defensive players and emphasize batter-runners are to use the runner's lane.

(4) Estimated budget impact. Two single bases may be used. Approximately \$250-\$500 for the double base at first base, however, installation costs vary depending on the type of field (e.g., may be higher for a turf field).

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

b. First, Second, and Third Base – 18-Inch Square Bases (Rule 1-7).

(1) Recommendation. Permit the use of the 18-inch square bases at institutionally owned facilities, provided that a double base at first base is used. *Note: The 15-inch square base remains the standard for use.*

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. This recommendation will permit institutions the ability to use professional baseball base sizes at institutionally owned baseball facilities.

(4) Estimated budget impact. Permissive rule. If an institution chooses to install the 18-inch square bases, the cost will vary depending on the type of base and installation cost (approximately \$250 to more than \$2000).

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

c. The Bat (Rule 1-12).

(1) Recommendation. Permit the use of bat sensor technology for in-game swing data collection. *Note: The device must be attached to the knob of the bat or embedded within the knob and data shall not be accessed during the game.*

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. Increased opportunities for swing data collection during live-game situations.

(4) Estimated budget impact. Permissive rule. If an institution chooses to use bat sensor device(s) for swing data, the cost will vary depending on the type of device (approximately \$150 to more than \$2,000).

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

d. Base Coach (Rule 3-3).

(1) Recommendation. A base coach may not be closer to the foul line than the inside edge of the coaches' box and no closer to home plate than the front edge of the box and no further than the back edge of the box once the pitcher has engaged the pitcher's plate.

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. Provides clarity on where base coaches can position themselves.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

e. Team Personnel Leaving Position (Rule 5-15-C-3).

(1) Recommendation. Eliminate the ejection penalty for players or team personnel leaving the vicinity of the dugout, bullpen, or position on the field at the time of a potential altercation or fight at the time of a verbal or physical altercation. Players or other team personnel remain subject to a game suspension.

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. An updated penalty structure for players and other team personnel to not include an immediate ejection should they leave their position at the time of a potential altercation or fight; however, players and other team personnel are encouraged to not leave their position.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

f. Electronic Devices (Rule 5-16).

(1) Recommendation. Limit the use of electronic communication devices to defensive purposes only (i.e., the use on offense would not be permitted).

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. Increased opportunities for swing data collection to take place during live-game situations. Electronic communication devices were originally created to be used for defensive purposes only and remain strictly prohibited from use on offense in professional baseball leagues.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

g. Electronic Devices (Rule 5-16).

(1) Recommendation. Permit use of in-game data/technology in the dugout to access scouting and analytics information during a game, including the use of preloaded and non-live recorded video. *Note: Access to pitch location (i.e., balls/strikes) must be restricted during the game; a device management feature to limit access of applications must be managed by the conference; and live video during a game is permitted, provided that it is delayed by a half-inning at a minimum.*

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. To allow limited and controlled use of technology for use during a game for coaching and player development purposes.

(4) Estimated budget impact. Permissive rule. If an institution chooses, the cost will vary depending on the type of device(s) and the permitted applications installed.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

h. Dead Ball – Play Suspended (Rule 6-5-F).

(1) Recommendation. Increase of offensive conferences to six (6) which would allow a batters' request to reset the action clock. Similar to defensive conferences, a coach is allowed to be involved in a maximum of three (3) offensive charged conferences plus one additional conference in the event of an extra inning game.

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. To allow a limited number of times for a batter to call a quick timeout to reset themselves and the action clock. This would make offensive and defensive charged conferences similar.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

i. Entitled to the Base (Rule 8-3-E).

(1) Recommendation. Fielder may not block the pathway of the base for the runner prior to having possession of the ball. *Note: A fielder shall not be deemed to have obstructed unless they have both blocked the base or plate without possession of the ball, and also hindered or impeded the progress of the runner attempting to score. A fielder shall not be deemed to have hindered or impeded the progress of the runner if, in the judgment of the umpire, the runner would have been called out notwithstanding the fielder having blocked the base or plate.*

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. Reduce intentional acts of blocking the base prior to attempting to make a play at the base.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

j. Getting the Call Right (Appendix E).

(1) Recommendation. Permit (a) any play that could result in a fair ball call being overturned to foul; and (b) any tag play regardless of the location to be reviewed.

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. This recommendation is consistent with the premise of Appendix E to get the call correct.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

k. Pitch/Between Innings Clock Protocol – Between Batters (Appendix F).

(1) Recommendation. Require the following timing rule for between batters. 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 their 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 and ready to hit with eight (8) or more seconds remaining).*

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. Pace of play.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

l. Pitch/Between Innings Clock Protocol – Mound Visits (Appendix F).

(1) Recommendation. Require the following timing rule for mound visits. 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 medical issue. Upon expiration of the clock, the 20-second NCAA pitch clock shall commence.*

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. Pace of play.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

m. Pitch/Between Innings Clock Protocol – Offensive Timeouts (Appendix F).

(1) Recommendation. Require the following timing rule for offensive timeouts. 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. Pace of play.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

n. Electronic Ball–Strike Challenge System.

(1) Recommendation. Permit the use of a challenge system for called balls and strikes. *Note: A batter, pitcher, or catcher must initiate a challenge immediately. Each team starts the game with three (3) challenges: (1) If a challenge is successful, the team retains that challenge; and (2) If the original call is confirmed, the team loses the challenge. If a team enters an extra inning with zero challenges remaining, they are awarded one challenge for every extra inning.*

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. Similar to Appendix E, this recommendation is consistent with the premise to get the call correct.

(4) Estimated budget impact. Permissive rule. Varies depending on equipment.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

o. Experimental Rule – Pickoff Attempts.

(1) Recommendation. To limit a pitcher to two disengagements (pickoff attempts or step-offs) per plate appearance unless a runner(s) advances during the plate appearance. A third disengagement in a plate appearance would be considered in a balk, unless it results in a successful pickoff attempt.

(2) Effective date. Immediately for conference play only.

(3) Rationale. Uncompetitive pick-off attempts have become a common method for “resetting” the action clock. Limiting the number of such disengagements to two per plate appearance will align college rules with professional rules and significantly enhance the overall pace of play.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

p. Experimental Rule – Pitcher Minimum Batters.

(1) Recommendation. To require a pitcher to either face a minimum of three (3) batters in an appearance or pitch to the end of a half-inning, with exceptions only for injury/illness. If a pitcher faces one batter to end an inning, the pitcher may be removed, but if the pitcher returns for the next inning, they must still face two more batters for a total of three.

(2) Effective date. Immediately for conference play only.

(3) Rationale. To enhance the pace of play by reducing excessive mid-inning pitching changes and the use of one-batter relief specialists.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Welcome and announcements.** The chairs of the Division I Baseball Rules Subcommittee and Divisions II and III Baseball Rules Committee welcomed the members and invited guests in attendance, and thanked them for their time.
2. **Review schedule, agenda and subcommittee operations.** The Division I Baseball Rules Subcommittee and Divisions II and III Baseball 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 Division I Baseball Rules Subcommittee and Divisions II and III Baseball Rules Committee were reminded of the directive of PROP from 2014. This directive encourages all to strongly consider providing at least a one-year delay for institutions before implementing any rules changes that have financial or facility implications.
3. **NCAA Sport Science Institute Injury Surveillance.** The Division I Baseball Rules Subcommittee and Divisions II and III Baseball 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.
4. **National coordinators of baseball umpires reports.** The Division I Baseball Rules Subcommittee and Divisions II and III Baseball Rules Committee received a report from the national coordinators of baseball umpires.
5. **Secretary-rules editor report and trends report.** The Division I Baseball Rules Subcommittee and Divisions II and III Baseball Rules Committee received a report from the secretary-rules editor.
6. **Review 2027 and 2028 rules proposals, 2026 rules survey results, committees' feedback and editorial change proposals.** The Division I Baseball Rules Subcommittee reviewed and considered several rules change recommendations and experimental rules as noted above in the Action Items section of this report.
7. **Future annual meeting and videoconference schedule.** The Division I Baseball Rules Subcommittee and Divisions II and III Baseball Rules Committee reviewed its future meeting and videoconference schedule. The next videoconference is scheduled for August 10 at Noon Eastern time.
8. **Selection of chair.** The Division I Baseball Rules Subcommittee tabled selection of the chair.

- 9. Other business.** The other business included an update from USA Baseball on the transition of policies and procedures for the NCAA standard for certifying baseball bat performance, Bat-Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR), to a USA Baseball performance certification protocol (USA BBCOR) with an effective date of July 1, 2027. Current protocol for performance testing standards for NCAA baseball will be maintained through the transition unless revised. The protocol will continue to be reviewed annually and recommendations for updates, as appropriate, be presented to the Division I Baseball Rules Subcommittee and Divisions II and III Baseball Rules Committee.
- 10. Adjournment.** The Division I Baseball Rules Subcommittee adjourned at 12:00 p.m. Eastern time on July 15, 2026.

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

NCAA Division I Baseball Rules Subcommittee July 13-15, 2026, Annual Meeting	
Attendees:	
John Brammer, active umpire.	
Jamie Breslin, Stanford University.	
Randy Bruns, secretary-rules editor.	
Tim Corbin, Vanderbilt University.	
Jeff Gosney, national coordinator of baseball umpires.	
Ben Greenspan, Northwestern University.	
J.D. Loudabarger, Arizona State University.	
Jeremy McClain, University of Southern Mississippi.	
Billy O’Conner, Xavier University.	
Pamm Zierfuss-Hubbard, California State University, Sacramento.	
Absentees:	
Jim Cole, Mercer University.	
Johnny Luetzow, Santa Clara University.	
Guests in Attendance:	
Jon Browar, DII national coordinator of baseball umpires.	
Avinash Chandran, The Datalys Center.	
Russell Hartford, USA Baseball.	
Jeffery Kensrud, equipment consultant.	
Steve Mattingly, incoming secretary-rules editor.	
Neel Rao, The Datalys Center.	
Don Umland, DIII national coordinator of baseball umpires.	
NCAA Staff Liaison in Attendance:	
Stanley Broaden.	
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:	
Paden Alie, Eric Breece, DJ Brown, Ben Brownlee, Randy Buhr, LaGywn Durden, Greg Johnson, Mallory Mickus and J.P. Williams.	