



MEMORANDUM

February 1, 2023

VIA EMAIL

TO: Softball Conference Commissioners, Directors of Athletics, Division I Conference Administrators, Head Coaches and Senior Woman Administrators at Institutions.

FROM: Shena Hollar, chair  
NCAA Softball Rules Committee.

Vickie Van Kleeck, secretary-rules editor  
NCAA Softball Rules Committee.

SUBJECT: Preseason Softball Playing Rules Reminders for the 2023 Season.

As a new playing season is rapidly approaching, we would like to remind you of a few important items for the 2023 season. The 2023 season will be the second year using the 2022 and 2023 NCAA Softball Rules Book, which can be downloaded as a PDF [here](#).

1. Updated 2022 and 2023 Case Book. The NCAA Softball Rules Committee recently updated the 2022 and 2023 Softball Case Book that contains approved rulings to use as a supplement to the official rules book. The updates reflect the most recent rules changes and game situations that better explain the application and adjudication of the official written rules. The online-only case book is available on the [NCAA Softball Home Plate central hub](#) under the Publications section or the [NCAA softball playing rules website](#) under Rules of the game.
2. Mandatory Regular-Season Barrel Compression Testing (BCT). As a reminder, regular-season BCT is required for all NCAA competitions during the 2023 season. If BCT is not performed prior to the tournament, series, doubleheader or game, the game shall not be played. This necessitates purchasing the required equipment, including the G4 SSL NCAA Softball Bat Compression Testing unit available at [www.barrelcompression.com](http://www.barrelcompression.com) and sufficient destructible bat stickers. Please note, the NCAA softball testing unit differs from both the NCAA baseball testing unit and the USSSA softball testing unit. Information on BCT required equipment and protocol guidelines is available in the [NCAA Softball Bat Compliance and Testing Information](#). If you have any questions about bat testing or equipment, please contact Dee Abrahamson, NCAA softball equipment consultant, at [abrahamson@niu.edu](mailto:abrahamson@niu.edu).
3. Bat List. The current NCAA Approved Softball Bat List (December 12, 2022) is available on the [NCAA Softball Home Plate](#) under NCAA Bats or the [NCAA softball playing rules website](#) under NCAA bat information. The next planned bat list distribution date is April 10.

4. Sideline and Home Run Fences (Rule 2.15). By January 1, 2027, sideline and home run fences constructed of wood, concrete or brick shall be padded. Padding must begin not higher than one foot off the ground and extend to the top of the wood, concrete or brick or six feet from the ground, whichever is shorter. This is required for any field hosting NCAA softball competition.
5. Experimental Rule Double First Base. By mutual agreement by the competing institutions, teams are allowed to experiment with a double first base during the 2023 spring season. Any institution interested in experimenting with the double first base must submit the request in writing to Vickie Van Kleeck at [ncaasbsre@gmail.com](mailto:ncaasbsre@gmail.com). Institutions granted permission to experiment are required to collect data and submit it to the Softball Rules Committee at the end of the season. More information is available [here](#) beginning on page two.
6. Registration on the NCAA Softball Home Plate Central Hub. The Softball Rules Committee will continue to utilize the Home Plate central hub to distribute rules clarifications, announcements and interpretations. Umpiring updates and clarifications also are posted to Home Plate throughout the season.

The Home Plate central hub is now available at [www.refquest.com](http://www.refquest.com). As a head coach, you should have received an email from RQ+ inviting you to join the Home Plate central hub and create a password. If you did not receive this email or have additional staff/coaches who would like access, please click the NCAA Softball Home Plate central hub link above and register as a coach at no cost.

If you have any questions now or during the season, please contact Vickie Van Kleeck at [ncaasbsre@gmail.com](mailto:ncaasbsre@gmail.com) or 540-819-4655.

Thank you for your attention to this information and good luck this season.

SH/VVK:af

cc: Carol Bruggeman  
NCAA Registered Softball Umpires  
NCAA Softball Rules Committee  
Selected NCAA Staff Members