



NCAA Softball Rules Interpretations and Clarifications – 2025 Season
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Rule 2.34, 10.18 and 11.2.1 and 2025 Major Rules Change

Rules Change:

To change the penalty for a time-between-pitches violation by the pitcher or catcher to an illegal pitch.

Rationale: To improve the image of the game and not negatively impact the offense if the pitcher still delivers a pitch after a timing violation has been called and the batter hits it. If a pitcher does not start the pitch within 20 seconds, it is a violation of a pitching rule and should be ruled like all other pitching violations – an illegal pitch. This is a delayed dead ball and the offensive coach may take the result of the play or the penalty for the violation (a ball awarded to the batter). There is no change to a violation by the batter – a strike will be assessed.

Interpretation:

When an option play occurs, teams must communicate their desire to challenge a reviewable aspect of the play prior to the umpire giving the offended coach the options to choose from.

Scenario (Approved Ruling):

Runner at first base. Pitcher violates the time between pitches as the runner steals second base. Umpire calls delayed dead ball and gives the offended (offensive) coach the option of the result of the play (runner at second base) or the penalty for the violation (a ball awarded to the batter). The offensive coach selects runner at second base. The defensive coach then wants to challenge that this runner left early at first base. The umpire does not allow this challenge because it was not requested before the umpire gave the offensive coach the option on the violation.