



# BASEBALL 2024

A supplement to the NCAA Baseball Rules • Prepared by the editors of *Referee*

## The Spirit of the Game?

### Unsporting Behavior a Major Focus of 2024 Offseason

College baseball has not escaped unscathed when it comes to the statistical revolution that has taken over at all levels of the game.

Spin rate. Exit velocity. Launch angle. Everywhere you look, there is a number attached to various individual acts in an effort to offer a statistical explanation as to why a player or team is or is not having success.

As the 2023 season marched toward June and the onset of NCAA Division I regional play, however, it wasn't this particular data set that demanded the attention of the NCAA Division I Baseball Committee. Instead, this was the number that had the committee chair, John Cohen, and his cohorts concerned:

1,338.

That's the number of NCAA Incident/Ejection/Suspension Reports that were submitted to the national umpiring coordinators across the three NCAA divisions during the 2023 regular season. A little less than half of those reports — 617 — stemmed from incidents at the NCAA Division I level. That number came in just a tick shy of a 100 percent increase — in other words, double the number — compared to the 2022 season, when there were 309 such reports.

Most concerning to the committee was the further statistical breakdown of that massive Division I number. Nearly two-thirds of those reports — 62.7 percent, or 387 reports — involved student-athletes. That marked a 355 percent increase from the 2022 season,

See "Conduct" p. 3



Unsporting behavior has become a major focus of the various stakeholders in NCAA baseball after a huge upturn in the number of incident reports submitted by college umpires during the 2023 regular season. Billy Van Raaphorst, San Diego.



# Welcome to the 2024 College Baseball Season



**George Drouches**

NCAA National  
Coordinator of Umpires

*Your role is not to direct others, but to encourage them to move in a direction that is best for them.*

An important aspect and responsibility of the NCAA Baseball Umpire Program is the training and education

of officials to increase knowledge, consistency and standard interpretations across this great country.

The information in this 2024 NCAA Preseason Baseball Guide is designed to provide not only information, but clarifications leading into the season. Umpires, always keep this publication with your development materials for use in your study and pregame discussions. Coaches, please keep it with your game day materials as a quick reference.

In addition, coaches, I strongly urge you to join in our collaborative efforts with the American Baseball Coaches Association leadership team to improve our great game by registering with [www.refquest.com](http://www.refquest.com) to access the NCAA's Home Plate page.

The standards of the NCAA Baseball Umpire Program is for all stakeholders affiliated with NCAA Baseball to align to the training, education and testing benchmarks, as this will all but eliminate the possibility that the integrity of our great game can be compromised.

This past summer, I mentioned to the NCAA Division I conference baseball administrators, conference baseball umpire coordinators, the Division I Baseball Committee and the Baseball Rules Committee that I was extremely proud of how the coaching and umpiring communities not only addressed the unprecedented hurdles,

but the impactful rule changes and game-changing challenges presented in the 2023 season; and that this successful collaborative effort, once again, will be required in 2024 as we continue the second year of the new two-year rules cycle.

Rule interpretations will continue to be issued by Randy Bruns, NCAA Baseball secretary-rules editor, as needed to clarify and educate all to the provisions.

*You have the ability to predict and understand the impact of the actions, and help navigate a better course.*

My goal has always been to continue to grow the Baseball Umpire Program and to manage and lead the many facets of the program. An excellent, dedicated and passionate staff assists this effort, greatly.

Perception and professionalism continue to be emphasized. Teaching and mentoring the "NCAA Way" is job number one: inclusive of consistency, accuracy and poise in our dealings on the field — as it is very important for the integrity of our game to select officials for the Championship who are adhering to the NCAA rules, points of emphasis and the NCAA Baseball Umpire Program's protocols; we have high expectations of our officials.

*You recognize the need to be aware of yourself and your surroundings, and challenge what doesn't feel right.*

During 2023, the Incident/Ejection/Suspension Reports increased 72 percent from 2022 — across all divisions. In Division I alone, ejections were up 99 percent; student-athlete ejections increased a very disturbing 255 percent from 2022. As a reminder: Whether you are a coach, an official or a student-athlete, when you are in control of your emotions, one can communicate in a professional manner. Umpires, use formal warnings whenever possible; discipline yourself to be credible and

concise in your communication; and remember your true role of managing the game.

Continuing in 2024, all head coaches' appeals of an umpire's decision or interpretation of the rules for a play on the bases are to be made at the middle point of the team's respective foul line. A head coach cannot enter the dirt circle for decisions or interpretations of the rules for plays at home plate or for lineup changes. Continued respect to on-field health and safety protocols: players, coaches and umpires should maintain physical distancing in 2024 as well.

*You believe that the best way to understand and help others is to listen to them.*

During the 2023 season, the NCAA Baseball Umpire Program, in conjunction with the conference baseball umpire coordinators, had a goal to eliminate the confusion across the entire collegiate baseball landscape concerning the inconsistent application of the Prolonged Participant Suspension and to further clarify the process/protocol of what actions constitute a Prolonged Suspension following an ejection. This Prolonged Suspension protocol greatly reduced the number of prolonged arguing suspensions regarding coaches and student-athletes in 2023 — compared to the number of prolonged suspensions during the 2021 and 2022 seasons.

To address a high percentage of ball/strike ejections regarding head coaches in 2022: a National (NCAA) Strike Zone Initiative was established in 2023, spearheaded by Paul Guillie, umpire coordinator for the ASUN, Ohio Valley, Southeastern, Southern, Southland and Sun Belt conferences. Our endeavor — as it pertains to technology — was to standardize the metrics by educating the coaching and officiating communities about

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# Conduct

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when only 109 Division I student-athletes were reported.

“They felt empowered to challenge everything, and also to intimidate their opponents rather than celebrate the greatness of our game,” said George Drouches, the NCAA national coordinator of umpires. “I give a lot of credit to the officiating community’s steadfastness in enforcing the rules given to us by the committee.”

Only 27.3 percent (169 reports) featured head coaches, the one participant who, by rule, has any authority to question or debate an onfield ruling with an umpire during NCAA baseball competition. The final 10 percent, 61 reports, involved assistant coaches.

Another breakdown of the data showed that 438 of the reports — 70.9 percent — came as the result of unsportsmanlike behavior, as

compared to 96 (15.5 percent) that centered on ball/strike arguments, 35 (5.7 percent) focused on safe/out rulings and 12 (1.9 percent) related to disagreements regarding the action clock.

“Certainly, it’s been disappointing and a concern for everyone on our committee,” said Matt Hogue, vice president for intercollegiate athletics at Coastal Carolina University, now in his fourth year on the NCAA Division Baseball Committee and, as of Sept. 1, its newest chair, having taken over for Cohen. “Especially as we saw the numbers start to increase early in the season last year. I felt we acted and addressed it as quickly as possible as we saw the trends. We began taking steps.”

One of the most noteworthy reactions was a memorandum drafted by Cohen and sent on May 29 to the head coaches and directors of athletics of all 64 teams selected to participate in the 2023 NCAA

Division I Baseball Championship. The subject line: “Sportsmanship during the 2023 NCAA Division I Baseball Championship.”

Cohen did not so much use the memo to chastise the recipients for the alarming increase witnessed over the previous four months of the 2023 regular season. Instead, he used his platform to issue reminders of the rules governing unsportsmanlike conduct in NCAA baseball and the need for participating teams to behave in a manner that would allow the college game to shine brightly on its biggest stage.

“Postseason competition brings heightened excitement and passion as teams have their sights set on Omaha. Postseason also amplifies emotion and intensity,” Cohen wrote. “Please remind your coaches, student-athletes and team personnel of their obligations to exhibit sportsmanship and remain in their designated

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# Welcome

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our efforts. The plan was to achieve consistency in not only how anyone would evaluate the information, but in developing a more universal measurement of an acceptable correctness rate when interpreting the data. Our goal was to set the standards, allowing all stakeholders to engage in meaningful dialogue across the collegiate game. This initiative and the collaborative diligence of the coaches, umpires and coordinators led to a significant decrease in the number of head coach ball/strike ejections in 2023. Umpires, continue with the

formal warning whenever possible in this situation; coaches, please recognize the rationale of the formal warning regarding balls and strikes.

I encourage all coaches, administrators and umpires to review the 2024 NCAA Video Review Regulations. Centralized Video Review in the 137 games played in the 2023 NCAA Division I Baseball Championship indicated 183 total reviews; 173 reviews were coach/team-initiated challenges; 137 of the 183 reviews were in the force/tag category; 137 of the 183 video reviews were confirmed or stands; 46 were overturned. The average length of review was 1 minute, 19 seconds.

*Your workplace culture is a place where all are welcome and all matter.*

I am extremely grateful for everyone who participates in our NCAA Baseball Umpire Program — for their selfless passion to service. In addition, much appreciation as well as to the conference baseball umpire coordinators for their dedication with collaborative efforts, including but not limited to: educational efforts, evaluation processes, assignment recommendations for NCAA Championships and the recruitment of new officials.

Wishing all the stakeholders of our great game of NCAA college baseball the very best in 2024. ■

## Acknowledgments

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## Conduct

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positions at all times. ...

"It is incumbent upon head coaches and their staff to ensure that ejections do not factor into the outcome of postseason competition."

The message, apparently, got through. There were a total of 137 games contested in NCAA Division I regional, super regional and Men's College World Series play in 2023. The total number of ejections? Four — two apiece featuring student-athletes and assistant coaches.

"I think everyone realized there were not going to be any breaks in the postseason and the consequences were going to be severe," Hogue said. "I thought everybody worked together very well and we had a nice outcome at the end of our season and did not have to deal with any unseemly issues."

"We witnessed exemplary sportsmanship and heightened gratitude," Drouches said. "Hopefully we can use the championship as a benchmark for behavior and a benchmark for sportsmanship."

"The mantra for 2024 is, reignite the spirit of the game — just a rekindling of the spirit of baseball, and hopefully we can drive that home. Be enthusiastic and focus on celebration rather than intimidation."

Thus, the crux of the issue. While some may claim that old-fashioned arguments over balls and strikes or safes and outs are endemic to the game, the data shows these interactions are not the area of greatest concern. Instead, the overwhelming bulk of the reported unsporting incidents are centered on issues such as the use of celebratory props on the field of play, over-the-top bat flips or chest-beating following home runs (hitters) or strikeouts (pitchers), and players leaving the dugouts or their positions on the field when a situation escalates.

Each of these actions are prohibited by rule in NCAA baseball. And

that's where Craig Keilitz, now in his 10th year as executive director of the American Baseball Coaches Association (ABCA), wants to focus the attention.

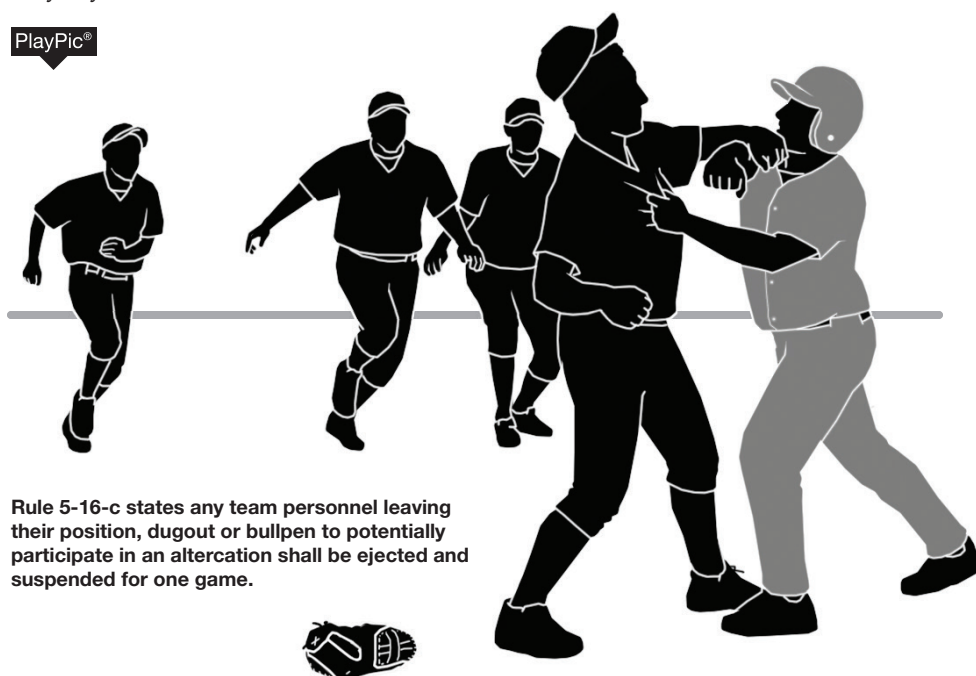
While admitting that players and coaches are not perfect and need to behave better, he also believes too much focus is being placed on the numbers themselves and not the policies that are creating the data pool.

"A lot of umpires are very frustrated at how they're being asked to handle the game," Keilitz said. "There hasn't been a change in behavior. There's been a change in how we look at it."

Keilitz points to another sport — football — to deliver this point. Minor skirmishes are frequent, and when players get out of line, whether it involves excessive physical contact during or after a play or otherwise unsporting behavior such as taunting, they are penalized by the officiating crew. However, player ejections are rare.

"When in our game something happens, it's nothing or it's an ejection," Keilitz said. "I think that's the difference. If you purely just look at the numbers it's alarming, but when you look at the facts it's nothing like they say it is."

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**Rule 5-16-c states any team personnel leaving their position, dugout or bullpen to potentially participate in an altercation shall be ejected and suspended for one game.**

For instance, when asked what responsibility players and coaches bear for respecting the game and the rules that govern it, even if they don't agree with it, Keilitz offers the following view.

"When a player takes two steps out of the dugout (in response to an escalating situation) and realizes it and then goes back, I think they are respecting it," he said.

Both Keilitz and Hogue agree on one thing: There is much discussion to be had going forward, including at the annual ABCA convention this winter, and all of the affected parties need to weigh in on how interactions from game participants and umpires look moving forward.

"There's certainly room to have a discussion about the penalties," Hogue said. "It's probably a combination of reviewing the penalty structure and other practices we can instill. I think we also in maybe looking at the penalty side and the discipline side, we need to also look at the reasonableness of some of the rules."

"Make our game better," Keilitz said. "Have coaches and administrators and umpires weigh in and all get on the same page as far as what's good for our game of baseball." ■

# Flashback: 2023 Rules Review

In an ongoing effort to streamline college baseball games and eliminate wasted time and unnecessary stoppages, the NCAA Baseball Rules Committee and Playing Rules Oversight Panel (PROP) approved tweaks to the 20-second action clock as part of their rule changes for the 2023 season.

The use of props during on-field celebrations, inadvertent deflections of a live ball by a batter or umpire, and new crew review and video review guidelines were also among the rule changes that took effect last spring.

## 20-Second Action Clock — Appendix F

The protocol for when the 20-second action clock starts once the ball is returned to the pitcher did not change from the 2022 season. However, the actions that must be taken by the pitcher and the batter to fulfill the action clock requirements changed significantly.

The pitcher is now required to begin the windup motion or the motion to deliver the pitch (not just come set) before the expiration of the 20-second time limit. The batter must be in the batter's box and alert to the pitcher with 10 seconds or more remaining on the action clock.

With runners on base, the pitcher may attempt as many pickoff throws as desired, which will stop the action clock and reset it when the ball is returned to the pitcher on the mound. There are unlimited resets of the clock for legitimate pickoff attempts.

With runners on base, the pitcher may step off the pitching plate to get a new sign or feint a throw toward a runner and the action clock will reset and restart immediately. A defensive player, such as the catcher, asking for time without taking a charged defensive conference also constitutes a reset. For these types of resets, only one per at-bat is permitted.

Each violation of the time limit is a ball charged against the pitcher. There

are no warnings.

**Play 1:** With a runner on first base, F1 engages the pitching plate in the set position. The action clock is at 10 seconds when F1 brings the hands together as part of the stretch. F1 then (a) delivers a pitch, (b) holds the ball for another 10 seconds before delivering a pitch, (c) makes a pickoff attempt on R1, (d) steps off the pitching plate and feints a throw to first base, or (e) steps off the pitching plate to get a new sign from the catcher. **Ruling 1:** In (a) and (c), the pitcher has legally complied with the 20-second action clock. In (b), the pitcher has violated the action clock and a ball shall be awarded to the batter. In (d) and (e), the pitcher is allowed one reset per batter. If the pitcher performs an action that requires a second reset with the same batter at the plate, it is a violation and a ball is awarded to the batter.

## Use of Celebratory Props (5-2-d)

In an effort to minimize potential acts of unsportsmanlike conduct directed at the opposing team, teams are no longer allowed to bring celebratory props onto the field of play following a home run, scoring play or at the end of an inning. Any such props must remain in the dugout.

The penalty is the ejection of the offending team personnel.

**Play 2:** With the bases loaded, B4 hits a bases-clearing grand slam over the left-field fence. As part of the home run celebration, the offensive team (a) brings a prop out onto the field of play, or (b) puts a crown on B4's head once the batter returns to the dugout after circling the bases.

**Ruling 2:** Illegal in (a) and the offensive team member responsible is ejected. Legal in (b).

## Inadvertent Deflection by Batter or Umpire (7-11-h Note)

New language was added to this subsection of rule 7-11, which lists all



The use of celebratory props on the playing field is not allowed due to a 2023 NCAA rule change. They are still allowed in a team's dugout.

the ways in which a batter or batter-runner is out. The note following subsection 7-11-h, which deals with a dropped third strike, now includes: "If a pitch that is not caught remains in the vicinity of home plate and it is inadvertently deflected by the batter or umpire, that ball is a dead ball and the runners should return to the bases they occupied at the time of the pitch. If the pitch was strike three, the batter is out."

**Play 3:** With a runner on third base and (a) a 2-1 count on the batter, or (b) an 0-2 count on the batter, B4 swings at a pitch in the dirt and misses. The ball bounces off the catcher's chest protector and settles behind the batter's left foot. The batter does not realize where the ball is and moves the left foot, inadvertently kicking the ball, at which point R3 breaks for home. **Ruling 3:** In both (a) and (b), the home plate umpire should declare a dead ball as soon as the ball is kicked by the batter. In (a), the runner is returned to third base and the batter now has a 2-2 count. In (b), the runner is returned to third base and the batter is out, with no right to attempt to advance to first base due to the dropped third strike.



### Getting the Call Right Without Video Review — Appendix E-1-c

Hit-by-pitch situations were added to the list of types of plays that can be discussed by an umpiring crew. The rationale is a base umpire may have a better view to help decide if a batter was hit by the pitch or moved intentionally to get hit by the pitch.

Umpire discretion now is also allowed in placing the runners in the changing of a call from “catch” to “no catch” and vice versa (E-1-c-9 and E-1-c-10).

**Play 4:** With the bases loaded, the home plate umpire rules a foul ball after a fastball comes up and in on B4, believing the ball hit the handle of the bat. U2, working in the middle of the diamond, has a clear look at the pitch and is 100 percent certain it hit B4’s elbow protector and not the bat. **Ruling 4:** By rule, U2 is now authorized to approach the umpire unsolicited and alert the home plate umpire to the information he or she has on the play. The ultimate decision to change the call still rests with the home plate (calling) umpire.

### Getting the Call Right With Video Review — Appendix E-2

Two new situations were added to the list of types of plays on which video review can be used by the umpiring crew: catcher’s interference with the batter’s swing, except on a squeeze play or steal of home; and malicious contact at any location.

Also, all types of reviewable plays now require a head coach’s challenge, except for a potential home run and malicious contact, which can be reviewed at any time. A crew chief or video review official’s review are allowed at their discretion in the last two innings or during extra innings if the affected team is out of challenges.

**Play 5:** In the (a) third inning, or (b) eighth inning, B3 hits a ball into the right-center gap. While running the bases, there is a collision between B3 and F3, but none of the umpires on the field see how it transpired. At the

end of playing action, the defensive team coach comes out to ask the umpiring crew to look at the play on video review, arguing that it was malicious contact. **Ruling 5:** In both (a) and (b), the umpiring crew can review the play and no head coach’s challenge is required, as malicious contact can be reviewed at any time.

Additional rule changes, listed in the order in which they appear in the 2023/24 rule book:

#### Wall Padding (1-2-e)

It is recommended padding be placed on all hard surfaces, such as backstops, sideline and outfield fences, that a player is likely to collide with during play. The change is intended to mitigate potential injuries to student-athletes who may run or slide into hard surfaces during play.

#### Size of Bases (1-7-c)

The standard size of bases for NCAA competition remains unchanged at 15 inches square and is required for all games played at facilities owned by a member institution. However, games may be played at non-institutionally owned baseball facilities, such as professional stadiums which use 18-inch square bases, without the need for a waiver if 15-inch bases are not available for use.

#### Illegal Bat Penalty (1-12-a , 1-12-b)

The first sentence of the penalty now reads: “A bat without the proper bat testing sticker, that has been altered to improve performance, or that has become flattened or illegal due to continued uses after bat testing has been completed, is an illegal bat.”

The rule change addresses concerns about a bat that may have become illegal after the start of a series or tournament. It is the responsibility of the batter to bring a legal bat to the plate.

### Dugout Protective Fencing or Netting (1-16)

College baseball facilities shall have protective fencing or netting on the field side of the dugout at a height not less than three feet from field level. This was recommended immediately and is now required Jan. 1, 2024, for Division I and Jan. 1, 2025, for Divisions II and III.

### Coach/Umpire Conference (3-6-e, Appendix E)

The decision was made to permanently adopt a temporary rule used during previous seasons requiring a head coach who seeks to question a call on the field to meet the calling umpire at the midpoint of their respective foul line. To consult with the plate umpire, the head coach may not enter the dirt circle around home plate, except during the pregame meeting.

#### Number of Umpires (3-6 Note)

A minimum of two umpires is required to begin an NCAA baseball game. A game may be completed with one umpire if necessary due to injury, illness or extenuating circumstances.

### Optional Extra Innings Procedure (5-8-d)

By conference rule or mutual agreement prior to the start of the game, teams may start each extra half-inning with a runner at second base. The player starting the extra inning as the runner at second base is the player (or their substitute) in the batting order immediately before the first batter of the extra inning.

### Unsportsmanlike Conduct (5-17)

The rule has been expanded to include both language and other unsportsmanlike actions directed toward opposing players, coaches, umpires or spectators, and includes actions such as negative comments directed at an opponent, umpire or spectator; bench jockeying; orchestrated activities to distract or ▶



- ▶ disconcert; bat flips near or toward an opponent or umpire; and the use of props or signs directed at an opponent or umpiring decision.

### **Runner Hit by Legal Pitch (6-4-b)**

If any legal pitch hits a runner trying to score, the ball is dead, and all baserunners advance one base without liability to be put out. A previous “exception” listed in rule 7-11-s that only allowed other baserunners to advance one base if they were also stealing on the pitch should be deleted.

### **Penalty for Listed Designated Hitter (DH) Not Batting One Time (7-2-b-2)**

The penalty for violation of this rule is similar to batting out of order. The proper batter (the originally listed designated hitter) may replace the improper batter before the batter becomes a runner or is put out and assume the current count. If the improper batter becomes a runner or is put out and an appeal is made before the next pitch, the original DH is declared out and all runners return to bases occupied before action by the improper batter. Any advances by runners due to a stolen base, balk, wild pitch or passed ball are legal. The original DH may remain in the game and the improper batter remains an eligible substitute.

If a proper appeal is not made, the improper batter becomes the DH and the result of the time at bat becomes official.

### **Force Play Slide Rule (8-4-a Exc.)**

A slight change to the rule maintains the basic premise that it is a safety and interference rule, but allows umpires to use judgment due to the unusual nature of a play, such as when a runner does not slide and is safe at the base before the throw arrives, or slides directly to a base from a position not in a direct line between the bases as long as there is no issue with safety or interference.

### **Runner Interferes With Fielding a Foul Ball (8-5-d Note 3)**

If a runner is declared out for interfering with a fielder who is attempting to field a foul batted ball, the ball is foul. If there are less than two outs when the interference occurs, the batter will complete his at-bat. If the third out occurs due to the interference, the current batter will be the first batter up the following inning.

### **Runner Pushed Off Base (8-5-i Note 2)**

A new note was added that states if, in the judgment of an umpire, a runner is pushed or forced off a base by a fielder, intentionally or unintentionally, at which the runner would otherwise be called safe, the umpire has the authority and discretion under the circumstances to return the runner to the base they were forced off following the conclusion of the play.

### **Pitcher Going to the Mouth (9-2-d)**

The pitcher shall not, while in the circle surrounding the pitcher’s plate, touch the ball after touching his mouth or lips, or touch his mouth or lips while in contact with the pitcher’s plate. The pitcher must clearly wipe the fingers of the pitching hand dry before touching the ball or the pitcher’s plate. The penalty is removal of the ball from play and a warning issued to the pitcher. Any subsequent violation shall be called a ball.

### **No Pitch Resulting from Batter Action (9-3-g Note)**

If the pitcher stops or hesitates the delivery or throws the ball in a manner the umpire judges is clearly not intended to be a pitch to the batter (such as a ball thrown into the ground or dropped) because the batter steps out of the box, holds up his hand or uses any other action as if calling time, it shall not be a balk (if runners are on base) or an illegal pitch (if there are no runners). The umpire shall call “time,” reset and resume play.



The NCAA again made changes to the 20-second action clock for the 2023 season. A pitcher now must begin their windup motion or motion to deliver the pitch, or make a legitimate pickoff attempt, within the 20-second window.

### **120-Second Timing Between Innings (Appendix F)**

New language was added that states if the pitcher/DH is the third out or on base when the third out is made to end the inning, the 120-second time limit should be started as always, but allow the P/DH to get their glove and be ready to start warmups without penalizing the defense if the time limit expires.

### **Timing Devices/Action Clock (Appendix F)**

Effective Jan. 1, 2024, for Division I and Jan. 1, 2025, for Divisions II and III, the use of one or more visible clocks is required. ■

# Test Yourself

In each of the following, decide which answer(s) is/are correct using the 2024 NCAA rules.

**1. The first batter in the bottom of the sixth inning receives a base on balls. The pitching coach makes the first trip of the game to the mound. After the trip, a pinch hitter comes to the plate. The head coach then comes out of the dugout to replace the pitcher.**

- Warn the head coach that he cannot make a second trip. If he continues, he is ejected but the pitcher may remain in the game with no penalty.
- Allow the trip but a substitution is not necessary.
- Warn the head coach that he cannot make a second trip. If he continues, he is ejected and the pitcher will be substituted for after he completes the at-bat.
- Allow the trip and the substitution is mandatory.

**2. With R1 on first, R2 on second and one out, B4 bunts a ball high into the air between F1 and F2. F1 easily settles under the ball but allows it to fall to the ground untouched. He then picks up the ball and the defense turns an easy double play.**

- The play stands. This is a double play.
- This is an infield fly and B4 is out. The ball remains in play and runners may advance at their own peril.
- This is an intentionally dropped ball and B4 is out. The ball is dead and runners return to their previously occupied bases.
- This is an intentionally dropped ball. The ball is dead, B4 is awarded first base and the other runners are forced to advance one base by the batter's award.

**3. With R1 on first base, no outs and a 1-0 count on B2, F1 fails to come to a complete stop and is called for a balk. His pitch is wild and eludes F2, going all the way to the backstop. R1 attempts to advance to third and is thrown out.**

- B2 and all runners who did not advance are awarded at least one base. Return R1 to second base.
- The play on R1 stands and he is out. The balk is still "acknowledged" and the count remains 1-0 on the batter.
- Immediately call "time" when the pitcher balks. R1 is awarded second.

**4. Daniel is listed as the DH for the pitcher, Baker, in the third spot in the batting lineup. In the fourth inning, Baker bats when it is Daniel's time to bat and hits a single.**

- This is an illegal substitution. Baker is called out and will be restricted to the dugout. Daniel is substituted for.
- This is batting out of order. Baker's time at bat is nullified, Daniel is out, and the next proper batter is the player who follows Daniel.
- This move is legal. The DH role is terminated for the remainder of the game and Baker will continue to bat in the third spot.



Can there ever be an infield fly ruling on a ball that is bunted in the air? See question No. 2.

- This move is legal. Baker can become the P/DH and continue to bat in the third spot.

**5. B1 hits a deep and high fly ball into the right-field corner. F9 gets under the ball at the fence near the foul pole, standing in foul territory. F9 jumps and touches the ball with his glove while the ball is over fair territory. The ball deflects off his glove and travels over the fence on the foul side of the foul pole.**

- Home run. The ball was fair and traveled over the fence in flight.
- Foul ball. The fielder was in foul territory when he touched the ball, and the ball was foul when it went over the fence.
- Two-base award. The ball was fair but traveled over the fence over foul territory.

**6. The starting pitcher listed on the lineup card is required to:**

- Pitch until the first hitter becomes a runner or is put out.
- Pitch until the first inning is over.
- Pitch to a minimum of three consecutive batters.
- There are no requirements for the starting pitcher.

**7. With the bases loaded and two outs in the bottom of the last inning, the score is tied. B6 is hit by the pitch and awarded first base. R3 legally touches home and scores and B6 legally advances to and touches first. R2 starts toward third but joins the celebration near first before he touches third base.**

- R2 is out for making a travesty of the game and the game is continued.
- The game is over. The run scores as only B6 needed to go to first and R3 touch home.
- R2 is out for abandoning his effort to run the bases and the game is continued.
- R2 is out only if the defense properly appeals R2 missing third base and the game is continued.

**8. The umpires call an infield fly that is intentionally dropped.**

- Call time, the batter is out and all runners are awarded one base.
- The ball is dead, the batter is out and any runners advance at their own risk.
- The ball is dead and the batter is awarded first base. Any runners advance one base if forced.

**9. With his feet in the windup position, the pitcher may do all the following except:**

- Deliver a pitch.
- Step to a base in an attempt to pickoff a runner.
- Step backward off the back of the pitcher's plate with his pivot foot.
- He may do any of the above.

**10. With R1 on first base and no outs, F2 interferes with B2's swing, but B2 hits a single to right field. R1 is thrown out attempting to advance to third. The offensive head coach states he elects to take the catcher's interference instead of the result of the play.**

- Allow the catcher's interference ruling. Place R1 at second and award B2 first.
- The batter and all other runners advanced at least one base. The interference is ignored and the play stands.
- The ball becomes dead immediately with catcher's interference. B2 is awarded first and R1 is awarded second.
- Allow the catcher's interference ruling. Place R1 at third and award B2 first.

**11. In the sixth inning with R3 on third and one out, B3 hits a fly ball to the center fielder for the second out. R3 tags up and scores on the play. Immediately after the play is over, it is determined the center fielder is an illegal player.**

- The center fielder is ejected. The out is nullified, the runner returns to third and the batter will come back to bat with the previous count.
- The offensive team may choose whether to allow the play to stand or nullify the previous play and have the batter come back to bat with the previous count.
- The out is nullified, the run still scores and the batter is able to come back to bat with the previous count.
- The play stands. The illegal substitute and the player he replaced are removed from the game. A third player must enter.

**12. With R3 on third base and one out, B3 swings, contacts F2's mitt and hits a deep fly ball to right field. R3 tags up and scores.**

- The ball is immediately dead on the catcher's interference. B3 is awarded first base. R3 returns to third.
- Since the offense scored, the play stands (no option).
- The offensive team may elect to ignore the interference and accept the results of the play or have the interference enforced.



**13. R1 is on first base and steals on the pitch. With a 1-2 count, B2 swings at the pitch and it hits him on his hands around the bat. The ball then goes straight back to the backstop. R1 advances all the way to third base on the play.**

- The ball is dead, B2 is out and R1 returns to first base.
- The ball is live, B2 is out and R1 is allowed to remain at third base.
- This is a foul ball, B2 remains at bat with a 1-2 count and R1 returns to first base.
- This is a hit by pitch, B2 is awarded first base and R1 is awarded second base.

**14. When a runner creates malicious contact with a fielder:**

- It is always offensive interference.
- It is offensive interference only if the fielder did not have possession of the ball.
- The ball is immediately dead, the runner is ejected and all other runners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the collision.
- There are no provisions for malicious contact.

**15. With R1 on first base and R2 on second, B4 gets a base hit. R2 is held up by the third-base coach as he rounds third trying to score. He slips as he tries to stop, contacts the third-base coach, then gets up and scrambles back to third. The umpire judges the contact was accidental.**

- The coach did not physically assist the runner when the contact is accidental. The ball is live and in play.
- The coach is guilty of physically assisting the runner. The ball is dead immediately and R2 is declared out. All other runners return to the last legally touched base at the time of the interference.
- The coach is guilty of physically assisting the runner. It is a delayed dead ball. After the play, R2 is declared out and the other runners remain at the bases they obtained during the play.
- The coach is guilty of physically assisting the runner. The ball is dead immediately, R2 is declared out and other runners are awarded the base they would have obtained had interference not occurred.

**16. With no outs, R1 attempts to steal second base. B2 hits a fly ball to left field that is caught. R1 misses second base on his way to third. While returning to first base to properly tag up, R1 touches second on his way by. When the ball comes into the infield, the defense throws the ball to second base and appeals R1 missed it.**

- R1 is out on appeal for missing the base his first time by.
- R1 is not out since he touched second his last time by.

**17. When an improper batter reaches first base, he becomes a proper batter and the results of his time at bat become legal when no appeal has been made and:**

- A pitch or illegal pitch has been delivered to the succeeding batter.
- An intentional base on balls has occurred.
- All the infielders left the diamond if the half-inning has ended.
- All of the above.

**18. With R3 on third and one out, B3 hits a pop-up foul down the third-base line. F5 makes the catch near his dugout and then steps inside with one foot.**

- The batter is out and R3 scores.
- The batter is out and R3 stays at third.
- The ball is live if it was stated in the ground rules "catch and carry" into the dugout was legal if the fielder doesn't fall down.

**19. With R1 stealing and one out, B3 hits a ground ball to F5. He fields the ball and immediately errantly throws the ball out of play beyond first base in an attempt to put out B3 running to first base. At the time of the throw, R1 was past second base.**

- R1 is awarded home and B3 is awarded second base.
- R1 is awarded third base and B3 is awarded second base.
- R1 is awarded third base and B3 is awarded first base.

**20. With R1 stealing and one out, B3 hits a ground ball to F4, who fields the ball and swipes in an attempt to tag R1 but misses him. He then errantly throws the ball out of play beyond first base in an attempt to put out B3 running to first base. At the time of the throw, R1 was past second base.**

- R1 is awarded home and B3 is awarded second base.
- R1 is awarded third base and B3 is awarded second base.
- R1 is awarded third base and B3 is awarded first base.

**21. B1 is granted time to talk to his third-base coach. While they are conferring, the defensive's team pitching coach comes out to talk with the pitcher. As the offensive conference concludes, the defensive coach returns to his dugout.**

- Only a defensive conference is charged.
- Only an offensive conference is charged.
- Both conferences are charged.
- Neither an offensive nor defensive conference is charged.

**22. With R1 on first base and one out, B3 hits a sharp ground ball that is deflected by F1 toward F4. As F4 is attempting to field the ball, he is contacted by R1, who is running directly toward second base.**

- The ball is live and in play. R1's contact with the fielder was unavoidable.
- Obstruction by F4. Once the pitcher had an opportunity to field the ball, the fielder is no longer protected and any contact between him and a runner is deemed his responsibility. R1 is placed at second and B3 is awarded first.
- Time should be called after the play and a ruling made based on what would have happened had the pitcher not deflected the ball.
- R1 is out for interference. If a batted ball is deflected by the pitcher and another fielder has a legitimate play to retire a runner, the fielder is protected and a collision by a baserunner results in interference. B3 is awarded first.

**23. A scuffle ensues at second base after what is thought by the shortstop to be a hard slide by the runner. The shortstop, Abe, begins punching the runner (who does not retaliate). From the defensive team's dugout, Baker and Charles run onto the field but do not engage in a physical altercation. Daniel sprints out of the dugout and also begins punching the runner. Edward stands up and moves to the top of the dugout but does not come onto the field.**

- Abe, Baker, Charles, Daniel and Edward are all ejected.
- Abe, Baker, Charles and Daniel are ejected.
- Abe and Daniel are ejected.

**24. With a runner on first, one out and a 2-1 count, R1 is stealing on the pitch. B3 swings and fouls the pitch so it bounces directly off F2's chest protector into the air. F1 dives and catches the ball before it hits the ground.**

- It is a foul tip if the ball goes directly from the bat and lodges in the catcher's uniform before he gets possession of the ball.
- Foul ball. Ball remains live, R1 is out.
- Foul ball. Ball is dead, R1 returns to first and the count is 2-2.
- Foul tip. Ball remains live and R1 remains at second.

**25. Which statement about a slide on a force play is true?**

- Contact occurring on top of the base because of a "pop-up" slide is illegal.
- A slider's momentum in the vicinity of the base may legally carry him through the base in the baseline extended.
- On any force play, the runner must slide regardless of his position in relation to the base.
- None of the above.

## ANSWERS

- d ..... 9-4-c
- a ..... 7-11-q Note
- b ..... 9-3 Pen. 1
- d ..... 7-2-b-10
- c ..... 8-3-o-2
- a ..... 5-5-b
- b ..... 5-8-d Note
- b ..... 7-11-j
- d ..... 9-1-a
- b ..... 8-2-e-1
- b ..... 5-5-j-2
- c ..... 8-2-e-1
- a ..... 7-4-a
- c ..... 8-7-a Pen. 1 & 3
- a ..... 3-3-e, 8-5-f
- b ..... 2-52
- d ..... 7-11-a-2
- a ..... 6-1-d
- b ..... 8-3-o-3 Note 1
- a ..... 8-3-o-3 Note 2
- c ..... 6-5-f-4
- d ..... 8-5-d Note 2
- b ..... 5-16-c Pen. 1
- c ..... 2-37
- b ..... 8-4

# Q&A:

## NCAA National Coordinator of Umpires

**Q: You are beginning your 10th year as the NCAA's national coordinator of baseball umpires. Can you reflect on the job now and how it compares to when you first took over in September 2014?**

**A:** NCAA baseball continues to grow annually — at the Division I level, it has exploded in recent years in popularity. It's an honor to serve all the stakeholders of NCAA baseball, as I am compelled to lead others because of a belief in something that is larger than myself.

**Q: What is the biggest change from an umpiring perspective that you've seen in NCAA baseball during your tenure?**

**A:** The quality of officiating has improved immensely and the consistency of enforcing the rules as written is more apparent, nationally. Umpire competition, truly, is at an all-time high.

**Q: From a national umpiring perspective, were you pleased with what you saw during the 2023 season?**

**A:** Yes, very pleased. Top-to-bottom, all divisions, it was one of our best years. Our baseball championships, in particular, were very well officiated. Much credit goes to the conference coordinators, as well as (Division II national coordinator) Scott Taylor and (Division III national coordinator) Don Umland, respectively.

**Q: Conversely, what did you see in the 2023 season that caused you concern or made you think it's something that needs to be addressed going forward?**



**George Drouches**

**NCAA National Coordinator of Umpires**

**A:** Student-athlete behavior. In 2023, I received 1,338 Incident/Ejection/Suspension Reports, compared to 776 in 2022. Student-athlete ejections, in Division I baseball, alone, were up 255 percent from 2022. The student-athletes felt more empowered than ever to debate and discuss calls with umpires and all the "in your face" taunting toward opponents.

**Q: The 20-second action clock received a lot of attention last spring as the rule was tweaked once again in an effort to improve pace of play. Overall, how do you feel umpires handled enforcement of the rule as now written, and where is there room for improvement?**

**A:** Umpires were very diligent with the enforcement of this rule; thus, increasing a much better flow

to the game. In addition, coaches understood and were more receptive of this rule as the season moved forward. Installing the visible clock will level the field: as an example, in the 16 games played at the 2023 MCWS, we had maybe four or five violations.

**Q: When evaluating umpires over the course of the season for possible postseason assignments and advancement, which do you view as more important: play calling ability or their ability to manage the games and big moments that come with the postseason stage?**

**A:** We have high expectations of our officials: Divisions II and III work diligently with umpire recommendations from their respective coordinators/assignors, and with their respective baseball committees. In Division I, all umpire observations throughout the regular season were sent to the conference's baseball umpire coordinator and to the individual umpire as well. All observations were completed using the four criteria shared in the commentary observation form (Game Management/Appearance/Technical/Ball/Strike Technical). Additionally, there were monthly conference calls between the NCAA baseball umpire advisors and Division I baseball conference umpire coordinators. Postseason observations were completed as well by head coaches, NCAA site representatives and crew chiefs — throughout the 137 games played in the 2023 NCAA Division I Baseball Championship. ▶

► **Q: One of the buzzwords that surfaces any time there is a perceived issue with umpiring is “accountability” and the belief that umpires do not face any consequences when they err during the course of their duties. Can you address how you hold umpires accountable at the national coordinator level?**

**A:** Accountability: there were over 1,000 umpire observations submitted at the Division I level; centralized video review corrects the on-field and we move on, quickly. My role is not to direct others, but to encourage them to move in a direction that is best for them.

Bottom line: I am responsible for protecting the NCAA Division I Baseball Championship.

**Q: The NCAA has faced several high-profile incidents in recent seasons with sportsmanship. Overall, how do you feel about where sportsmanship and the treatment of umpires is at in college baseball, and is there anything you would like to see the umpires do differently in this area?**

**A:** As with umpire competition at an all-time high, NCAA baseball has never been in a better place — which brings heightened excitement

and passion, which amplifies emotion and intensity. The NCAA Baseball Umpire Program will remind coaches, student-athletes and team personnel of their obligations to always exhibit good sportsmanship. It is incumbent upon head coaches and their staff to ensure that ejections do not factor into the outcome of postseason competition. Rule 5-12-g requires teams without at least nine eligible players to forfeit the competition. The umpires need to remain diligent and continue being consistent in ejecting players and coaches who are deserving of the penalty. ■

## Q&A:

# NCAA Division II National Coordinator of Umpires

**Q: Why did you make the decision to pursue the Division II national coordinator role when it came open?**

**A:** I spent 11 years with the Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association (MIAA) as the coordinator and seven years with the Great Lakes Valley Conference (GLVC). I thought that it would be a nice way to end my career, actually. I'd like to do this for 7-10 years and call it a career. I think that I can put my stamp on it and enhance what my predecessors have done.

**Q: You come into the national position having worked in two Division II conferences versus having worked at a different level within college baseball. How much does that help, already having that understanding of how things work at the Division II level?**

**A:** I think it provides a huge benefit. I know what the coaches, the conferences, the athletics directors



**Jon Browar**

NCAA Division II  
National Coordinator of Umpires

Just knowing what's required at that level and what's expected, I think is a huge advantage.

**Q: How do your job responsibilities change as a national coordinator of umpires compared to being a conference coordinator?**

**A:** Naturally, my job is to continue to identify the best umpires in each region for postseason play. At the Division II level, we're restricted to using umpires within regions. If the best umpires in the country were all in one location, I can't use them. We have to go by region, so it's my job to identify the best in each region. I'm going to request the nomination list or watch list from my conference coordinators by the middle of November so I can set my travel schedule up in case I need to go watch people. My performance is judged by the product I put on the field, and I intend to put the very ►

are expecting because I have dealt with so many of them in the past.





- best product on the regional, super regional and championship fields.

**Q: From your perspective gained as a conference coordinator, what are Division II umpires doing really well?**

A: That's a great question. Most Division II umpires have the dream and desire to become Division I umpires. That being said, not everybody is going to be because there's only so many slots available. There's geography to be taken into account. I have just found that Division II umpires are, as a whole, very hungry, they're hard-working; they want to get to the next level.

**Q: Conversely, what's one thing you'd like to see Division II umpires work on moving forward?**

A: That's a hard one to answer from a national perspective, because everybody has their own little things to work on. If I had to pick out 1-2 little things it would probably be game management and the clock.

**Q: The Division II level is unique because of its transitional nature**

**with many umpires trying to move up to Division I, and therefore a constant need to replenish the umpiring roster with umpires moving up from Division III. What's your perspective on the need to balance that and the always evolving nature of the Division II umpiring staff?**

A: I look at that as a positive. My former job as a Division II conference coordinator, I felt, was to get guys promoted. I was always seeking out new staff members because I wanted to see 6-10 guys get promoted every year. If I didn't promote my guys to the Division I coordinators, chances are they would never get found. I always felt that was part of my job as a Division II coordinator.

**Q: What items are at the top of your list that you are hoping to address in your first year in the national coordinator position?**

A: There's two things I want to talk to the coaches about. My main initiative that I want to take to the different conferences around the country is the unsportsmanlike

conduct directed toward umpires. There is nowhere in the world that I can walk into somebody's office and talk to them that way. I'd be fired. I talked to every single coach in my conferences about it. It didn't completely solve the problem, but it did make a difference. I also want to talk to coaches about cultivating umpires. Those players that aren't going to go on and sign pro contracts, but want to stay in the game ... I want to give them a chance to umpire. We have to recruit more umpires, because we are eventually going to run out of umpires.

**Q: Any parting thoughts as you prepare for your first season in this new role?**

A: I look forward to working with all the coordinators across the country, and promoting Division II baseball on the umpiring side of it. I think we've got some of the finest people/umpires in college baseball, and I'm just looking forward to getting going. ■

## 2023 NCAA Championship Umpires

### Division I

**Ramon Armendariz**  
Inglewood, Calif.

**Angel Campos**  
Tucson, Ariz.

**Brandon Cooper**  
Louisville, Ky.

**Jeff Head**  
Hoover, Ala.

**Casey Moser**  
Lago Vista, Texas

**Travis Reininger**  
Brighton, Colo.

**David Savage**  
Lawrenceville, Ga.

**Billy Van Raaphorst**  
San Diego, Calif.

### Division II

**Jeff Arthur**  
Carbondale, Pa.

**Bobby Dunnigan**  
Boone, N.C.

**John Hastings**  
O'Fallon, Ill.

**Jon Jordan**  
East Longmeadow, Mass.

**Ryan Karle**  
Topeka, Kan.

**Ryan McCraney**  
Pensacola, Fla.

**Brooks O'Hearn**  
Aurora, Colo.

**Tyler Schmidt**  
Cheney, Wash.

### Division III

**Eric Byrum**  
Hertford, N.C.

**Michael Chukerman**  
Venice, Calif.

**Rudy Firmbach**  
Kinderhook, N.Y.

**Lou Kammermeier**  
Pittsburgh, Pa.

**Dominick Longbucco**  
Chicago, Ill.

**Bret Miell**  
Marion, Iowa

**Bill Rush**  
Philadelphia, Pa.

**Roger Wolfe**  
Severn, Md.

# NCAA Misconduct Penalties

Type of Offense	Offender	Consequence for First Offense	Consequence for Second Offense	Consequence for Third Offense	Rule Ref.
Unsportsmanlike conduct or language directed toward an umpire or an opponent	Assistant coach, player or team personnel	Ejection from present contest plus a one-game suspension	Ejection from present contest plus a three-game suspension by the same individual in the same season	Same as second offense	2-26-f
Unsportsmanlike conduct or language directed toward an umpire or an opponent	Head coach	Ejection from present contest - no suspension	Same as first offense	Same as first offense	2-26-f
Unsportsmanlike conduct or language directed toward an umpire or an opponent	Player whose last listed position is that of a pitcher	Ejection from present contest plus a four-game suspension	Same as first offense	Same as first offense	2-26-e
Game Misconduct—removing team from the field; refusing to continue	Head coach	Ejection from the present contest plus a two-game (2) suspension	Same as first offense	Same as first offense	5-15-b
Prolonged or continued arguing, offensive language or excessive expressions directed at an umpire or game official after an ejection	Any participant	Two-game suspension added to the present accumulative total for applicable suspension penalties	Same as first offense	Same as first offense	2-26-h; 5-15-a (4)
Fighting	Any participant	Ejection plus a four-game suspension	Ejection plus a suspension from the team's next five contests	Ejection plus a suspension for the remainder of the season, including postseason competition	5-16-a
Physical abuse of participants or umpires	Any participant includes head coach	Ejection plus a four-game suspension	Ejection plus a suspension from the team's next five contests	Ejection plus a suspension for the remainder of the season, including postseason competition	5-16-b
Leaving dugout, bullpen or position on the field at the time of a potential altercation	Player(s) or team personnel (excluding coaches)	Ejection from present contest plus a one-game suspension	Same as first offense	Same as first offense	5-16-c
Leaving position to participate in a fight	Any participant	Four-game suspension after the ejection	Suspended for the remainder of the season	N/A	5-16-c, Penalty (1), (5)
Intentionally throwing at a batter	Pitcher, or pitcher and head coach	Ejection plus a four-game suspension. The head coach is not ejected if no warning is given. If a warning has been given, the head coach is ejected from that game and suspended for one game	Ejection plus an eight-game suspension. The head coach is not ejected if no warning has been given. If a warning has been given, the head coach is ejected and suspended for one game	Ejection plus a suspension for the remainder of the season, including postseason. If no warning is given, the head coach is not ejected. If a warning is issued, the head coach is ejected and suspended for one game	5-16-d, (1), (2), (3)
Verbal abuse/bench jockeying	Any participant or game personnel other than head coach	After a warning, offender is ejected for that game plus a one-game suspension	When verbal abuse/bench jockeying continues, head coach is ejected (no suspension). All others ejection plus one-game suspension	Same as second offense	5-17
Failure to leave sight and sound of the playing field and grandstands after an ejection	Any participant	Three-game suspension added to any penalties already accumulated	Same as first offense	Same as first offense	3-6-d, Note 2 and 3
Collision rule	Player	Ejection from the present contest. One-game suspension	Same as first offense	Same as first offense	8-7
Ejection for tobacco use	Player or team personnel and head coach	Ejected from present contest plus one-game suspension for everyone other than the head coach	Same as first offense	Same as first offense	3-11
Post-participation ejection for unsportsmanlike conduct	Assistant coach, player (other than a pitcher) or team personnel	Ejection from next contest plus a one-game suspension. These two games will be added to any other applicable penalties for other offenses	Ejection from next scheduled contest plus a three-game suspension for a total of four games. These four games will be added to any other applicable penalties for other offenses	Same as second offense	2-26-c; Appendix D
Post-participation ejection	Head coach	Ejected from team's next game-No Suspension	Same as first offense	Same as first offense	2-26-c; Appendix D
Post-participation ejection for a pitcher	Player whose last listed position is that of a pitcher	A total suspension of four games	Same as first offense	Same as first offense	2-26-e
Possession or use of any foreign substance or moisture applied to the hand or fingers, or do anything to deface the ball	Pitcher	Ejection plus four-game suspension	Ejection plus four-game suspension	Ejection plus four-game suspension	9-2-e

Note 1: It is the responsibility of the institution's Head Coach and Director of Athletics to administer and enforce any suspension penalties.

Note 2: Suspension penalties, regardless of the number, shall be served during the offending team's next scheduled contest(s). Post-participation ejections and any applicable suspension penalties shall also be served during the offending team's next scheduled contest(s). Conferences and institutions may choose to implement additional penalties for misconduct.

Note 3: A listing of ejection and suspension procedures is contained in Appendix D.



# Umpires and Dietary Supplements



**Dr. Douglas J. Ramos**

**Former Chair of the NCAA Committee on  
Competitive Safeguards and  
Medical Aspects of Sports**

As we look to optimize our health we are presented with many options for nutritional supplements. These can be found at your drugstore, grocery store, gym, supplement store or online. Sometimes the presentation of these supplement benefits can be misleading and may or may not be beneficial to your health and well-being.

In general, it is always better to try “food first.” We must be mindful, however, of the fact that some foods and some supplements can both heal and harm. In many situations a “food first” approach can on occasion have dramatic improvements in health. There have been reports of improvement in weight, blood pressure, diabetes and heart disease, to name just a few conditions, with a “food first” approach. In general, a diet high in nutrient-dense plant foods is more beneficial than processed foods, and a dietary plan that is unique and structured for each individual is desired.

In regards to supplements, the

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not approve dietary supplements like it does medicines, however, it does regulate these products to some degree. Products that claim to affect diseases are generally subject to regulation. The FDA does maintain oversight on safety issues for supplements, but often times this is after the supplement is available in the market.

If it sounds too good to be true with a supplement, be cautious. Dietary supplements can be beneficial to your health but can also have health risks. Supplements can help you meet your daily requirement of essential nutrients but also may have ingredients that can have a strong effect on the body. Be alert to the possibility of adverse side effects and that the possibility of contamination of the product can occur. This is particularly true in supplements to enhance performance and/or physique.

Read product labels but keep in mind that contaminants are more likely to occur in supplements than they are in traditional medications. A consultation with a health care provider or an athletic trainer can help to decrease risks associated with supplement usage. Mixing medications with supplements can at times endanger your health. Imported supplements may be at a particularly higher risk to cause harm. Keep in mind that “natural” does not mean “safe” and “made in the USA” does not always mean it was or is safe.

Watch out for supplements that claim the following: 1. One product does it all. 2. Personal testimonials. 3. Quick fixes. 4. All natural. 5. Miracle cure. 6. FDA approved. It is good advice to consult your health care professional before you begin taking any supplements, particularly if you are on medications and/or you are planning to take a supplement, and also if that supplement is marketed as

performance-enhancing.

Eating right, exercising right and, if beneficial, taking the right safe supplements will enhance your health and hopefully your performance. ■



## Umpiring Coordinators

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**A summary of  
video review during  
the 2023 NCAA  
Division I Baseball  
Championship:**

**Games Played**

Total	137
MCWS	16
Super Regionals	20
Regionals	101

**Games w/One or  
More Reviews**

Total	105 (77%)
MCWS	13 (81%)
Super Regionals	18 (90%)
Regionals	74 (73%)

**Reviews**

Total	183
MCWS	22
Super Regionals	35
Regionals	126

**Review Results**

<b>Confirmed</b>	<b>93 (51%)</b>
MCWS	15 (68%)
Super Regionals	20 (57%)
Regionals	58 (46%)

<b>Stands</b>	<b>44 (24%)</b>
MCWS	1 (5%)
Super Regionals	7 (20%)
Regionals	36 (29%)

<b>Overtaken</b>	<b>46 (25%)</b>
MCWS	6 (27%)
Super Regionals	8 (23%)
Regionals	32 (25%)

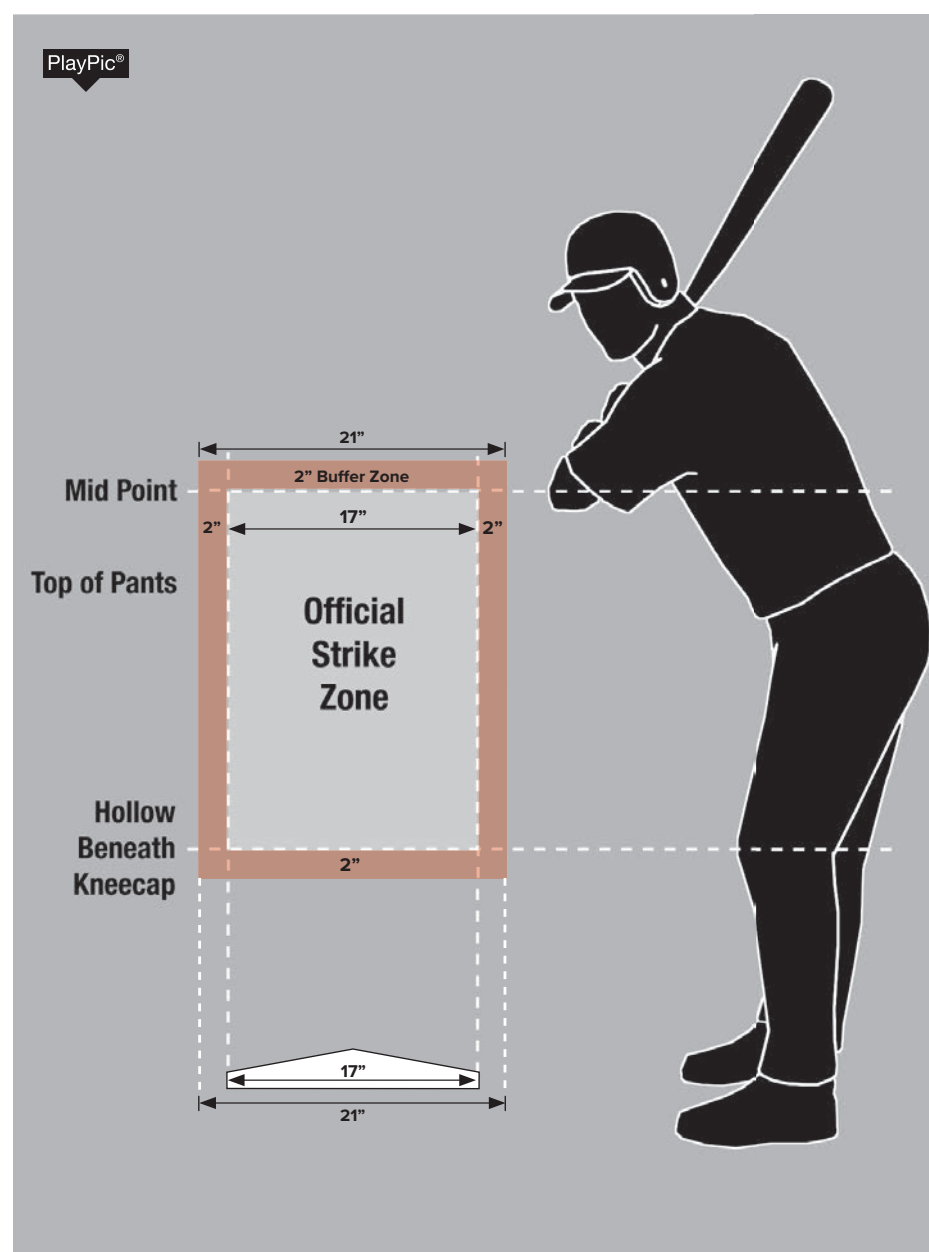
**Reviews Per Game: 1.34**

**Average Review  
Length: 1:19**

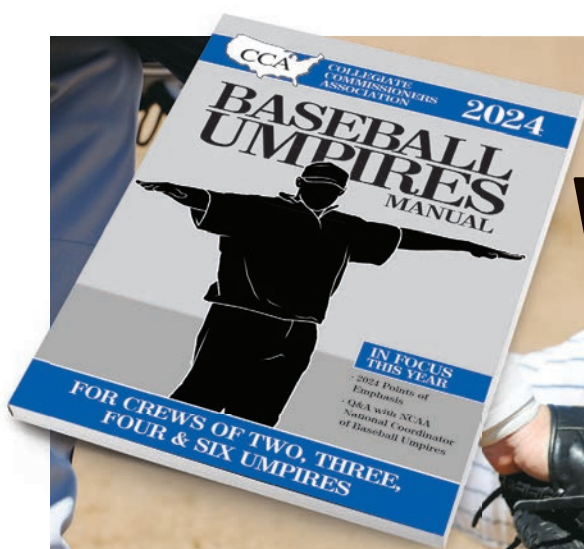
# National Standard Strike Zone Initiative

Recognizing the increasing benefits and utilizing technologies as a tool in NCAA Baseball, a National (NCAA) Standard Strike Zone Initiative — as it pertains to technology — has been established, allowing officials to use the information to improve their performance.

We plan to achieve consistency in not only how anyone would “evaluate” the information, but develop a more universal measurement of an acceptable correctness rate when interpreting the data. Our goal is to set the standards, allowing all stakeholders to engage in meaningful dialogue across the collegiate landscape. ■



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