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**NCAA**<sup>®</sup>

# **2017 – 2018 NCAA Baseball Rules Changes & Points of Emphasis**

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Secretary-Rules Editor  
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# Bat Restrictions – 1-12(c) and (d)

- No Use of Attachments
  - No external attachments
- No Use of Attached or Imbedded Technology
  - No data collection or transmission device can be externally attached or imbedded within any part of the baseball bat used during the game.

# Illegal Bat Penalty – 1-12 Penalty

- Definition of Illegal Bat
  - Flattened or altered to improve performance
- Penalty
  - Before the first pitch, batter is out
  - After the first pitch, batter is out and base runners cannot advance as a result of a batted ball.
  - Bat is removed from the game.
- Reminder – At pregame meeting, receive confirmation that the team's equipment meets NCAA rules and regulations.  
Rule 4-4(c)

# Size of Fielder's Gloves – 1-13

- Fielder's gloves – Maximum Length Increased to 13 inches
  - First baseman – glove or mitt
  - All other fielders' gloves
- Catcher's glove or mitt
  - No change
  - Any dimension is allowed

# Bullpen – Use for Warm-up – 2-13

- Facilities should be comparable for both home and visiting teams
- Pitchers should be warmed up in designated bullpen area
  - Not in another facility or location out of sight and sound of playing field

# Obstruction – 2-55

## Initial Tangling of Fielder and Runner

- Fielder attempts to catch a wild throw during an attempted steal, ball is misplayed, fielder and runner tangle
  - Initial tangling is not obstruction
  - Fielder restricted from any further hindrance after initial contact

# Obstruction – 2-55 (also Rule 8)

## By the Catcher

- Catcher can't block the pathway of a runner attempting to score unless:
  - Ball in his possession OR
  - In the “act of fielding”
- Act of Fielding
  - About to receive a thrown ball
  - Ball in flight toward and near enough to the fielder that he must occupy his position to receive the ball
  - Judgement of the umpire



# Official Warning – 2-57

- “This is your official warning. If you continue, you will leave me no option but to eject you.”
- Slang terms do not constitute an official warning.
  - “Knock it off.”
  - “That’s enough.”
  - “Don’t say anything else.”
  - “I’ve heard enough.”

# Ejection Penalty - 2-26, 3-1

## Substitute Head Coach

- When head coach is ejected and replaced by substitute head coach:
  - Substitute has duties, rights, responsibilities of head coach
    - Making lineup changes
    - Communicating with umpires
  - However, if substitute head coach is ejected, he will serve a one-game suspension.

# Use of Alternate Baseballs – 4-1

- Umpire is sole judge of whether is ball should be checked
  - Bounced off equipment or a fence/wall
  - Appears discolored, scuffed, or otherwise unsuitable for play
- No need to check or replace the ball every time a pitch is not cleanly caught or after a routine ground ball
- Weather or field conditins may be a factor
- This is a pace of play issue.

# Ground Rules – 4-5

- Added sentence for clarification:
  - No ground rule shall conflict with the official playing rules.



# Winning Run Forced Home – 5-8(d)

- Winning run scored in last half inning of regulation game or last half inning of extra inning as a result of:
  - Base on balls
  - Batter hit by pitch
  - Any other play with bases full which forces the batter and all runners to advance without liability to be put out
- Umpire declares game over when R3 touches home and batter-runner touches first base
  - Exception – fans rush field, preventing runners from touching base
  - Umpires – be safe, award the bases, no appeal.



# Halted Game – 5-9(c)

- When the Halted-Game Procedure is agreed upon prior to the start of a nonconference contest and the contest cannot be finished, the unfinished game becomes “no contest” if the game has not met the conditions of a regulation game.
  - The agreement to use the Halted Game rule should be clearly understood and mutually agreed upon by the coaches and athletic directors of the teams before the start of the contest and communicated to the umpires. The agreement should consider when any halted game may be able to be completed.
  - Every effort should be made by both teams to complete the game as agreed upon.

# Hit by Pitch – 8-2(d)1

- Updated language
  - A batter may not make a movement to intentionally get hit by the pitch and must avoid being hit whenever possible. If the batter's action is deemed intentional, then: (rest of the rule remains the same – ball is dead, ball or strike determined by location of ball)
  - If, in the umpire's judgement, the batter is unable to make an attempt to avoid the pitch, the batter will be awarded first base.

# Collision Rule – Plays at the Plate 8-7

- Same interpretation as used last year, now part of official rule





# Windup Position – 9-1(a)

- The pitcher shall stand with his chest and shoulders generally facing the batter, with the pivot foot on or in front of and touching the pitcher's plate with the other foot free.
  - 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 then one step forward with the free foot.

# Pivot Foot – Prohibit 2<sup>nd</sup> Push-off – 9-2(I)

- A pitcher shall not jump or push forward off the pitcher's plate with his pivot foot and then bring his foot back to the ground and make a second push-off to deliver the pitch.
  - This is an illegal pitch and shall be a balk with runners on base.
- Not a violation if pivot foot maintains consistent contact with the ground without a second push-off.

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# Pitcher – Distracting Tattoos

- Tattoos on the pitcher's body that a batter or umpire consider distracting must be legally covered.
  - The pitcher shall remove the distracting item or cover the distracting tattoo upon request of the umpire or be ejected from the game.

# Momentary Adjustment – 9-3(h)

- The pitcher may momentarily adjust the ball in the glove and separate the hands as long as it is prior to assuming a legal pitching position.

# Permissible Warm-up of Defensive Players During Pitching Change – 9-4(a)

- During a free trip (defensive charged conference) or a timeout to allow a substitution for the pitcher, a defensive player may warm up with another defensive player.
  - Both players must be in the current lineup and remain in fair territory.
  - For example, bullpen catcher or other substitute cannot participate.

# Catch and Carry – Fall or Step into Out-of-Play Area – 6-4(e)

- Each runner, other than batter, may without liability to be put out, advance one base when a fielder, after catching a fly ball, steps or falls into any out-of-play area.
  - Safety issue
  - Consistency of ground rules

# Video Instant Replay – Appendix E - B

- Schools or conferences permitted to use field-level equipment if available to review the following plays:
  - Batted ball fair or foul - ball must first touch the ground or a fielder beyond the initial position of the first or third baseman.
  - Ground rule double or a home run.
  - Any catch or no catch in the outfield or foul territory.
  - Within infield, “no catch” can be changed to “catch” only if it results in 3<sup>rd</sup> out with any runners on base, or any time with batter runner only.
  - Spectator interference.
  - **Scoring plays at home plate including collisions/time plays.**



# Points of Emphasis

- Coach/Player/Umpire Interactions
- Pace of Play
- Alteration of Bats
- Pitching Positions
  - Difference between windup and set positions
- Tobacco Use
- Hit by Pitch

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