

## 2017 AND 2018 NCAA BASEBALL RULES CHANGE PROPOSALS

RULE	RULES CHANGE PROPOSALS AND RATIONALES
Rule 1-12-c Attachments	<p>There shall be no external attachment(s) to any part of the bat.</p> <p><b>RATIONALE:</b> To prohibit attachments, created as part of the manufacturer’s product line or fabricated by a third party, the baseball rules committee is concerned about student-athlete safety and competitive equity and fair play that could develop with permitting attachments to the baseball bat.</p>
Rule 1-12-d Attachments and Embedded Equipment	<p>There shall be no data collection or transmission device externally attached or embedded within any part of the bat.</p> <p><b>RATIONALE:</b> The rules committee is concerned about competitive equity and fair play that could develop by permitting these types of data collection devices.</p>
Rule 1-12- Penalty	<p>Add language to penalty for a. and b. – “PENALTY for a. and b. – A bat that has been flattened or altered to improve performance is an illegal bat. If such an illegal bat is detected before the first pitch, <b><u>the batter shall be called out and the bat shall be removed from the game. If an illegal bat is</u></b> detected after the first pitch, legal or illegal, the batter shall be declared out and baserunners shall not advance as a result of a batted ball. The bat shall be removed from the contest.</p> <p><b>RATIONALE:</b> Currently, if a batter comes to the plate and is found to have an illegal bat prior to the first pitch, the bat is removed from the game and the batter is required to use a bat that conforms to the rules. Adding this pre-pitch penalty is intended to prevent attempts to bring illegal to the plate.</p>
Rule 1-13-c	<p>Change rule to: “Every player except the catcher and first baseman is restricted to the use of a fielder’s glove not more than <del>42</del> <b>13</b> inches long nor more than 8 inches wide.”</p> <p><b>RATIONALE:</b> The permissible size of fielding gloves at the professional level has been increased to 13 inches. For consistency in purchasing, permitting this size would allow student-athletes to purchase a fielder’s glove without concern that it is larger than permitted.</p>
Rule 2-13	<p>Add A.R. 2): “During a game, facilities used for potential substitute pitchers or other players to warm up should be comparable for both home and visiting teams. Pitchers should be warmed up in the designated bullpen area, not in another facility or location out of sight and sound of the playing field.”</p> <p><b>RATIONALE:</b> Especially during games played in inclement weather, there is a concern that home teams may have an unfair advantage if they have facilities available to warm up pitchers that are not available to the visiting team. In the interest fair play, bullpens shall be used by both teams as defined in the rule.</p>
Rule 2-55	<p>Add A.R. 5 – “When a fielder attempts to catch a wild throw during an attempted steal, if the ball is misplayed and the runner and fielder tangle, the fielder is restricted from any further hindrance after the initial contact.”</p>

	<p><b>RATIONALE:</b> Establishing this administrative ruling will clarify that the act of initially tangling between runner and field is not obstruction, but any further hindrance of the defensive player would be obstruction.</p>
Rules 2-55; 8-2-e;8-2-f; 8-2-h;8-3-e; 8-3-f; 8-3-g	<p>Add note to Obstruction – “Note: The catcher, without the ball in his possession, has no right to block the pathway of the runner attempting to score. The base line belongs to the runner and the catcher should be there only when he is fielding the ball or when he already has the ball in his hand. If a fielder is about to receive a thrown ball and if the ball is in flight toward and near enough to the fielder so he must occupy his position to receive the ball, he may be considered “in the act of fielding” a ball. It is entirely up to the judgment of the umpire as to whether the fielder is in the act of fielding a ball.”</p> <p><b>RATIONALE:</b> Creating this Note will allow for clearer understanding of the specific requirements for obstruction by the position of catcher or person covering home plate. This is proposed to improve the safety of both the catcher and runner during plays at the plate.</p>
<b>Rule 2-57 (Renumber following definitions)</b>	<p>Establish new Rule 2-57 of Official Warning. The definition will read “<b>Official Warning</b> – An ‘Official Warning’ is a warning from an umpire that carries the words ‘This is your official warning. If you continue, you will leave me no option but to eject you.’ Slang terms such as, but not limited to, ‘knock it off,’ ‘that’s enough,’ ‘don’t say anything else;’ or, ‘I’ve heard enough’ do not constitute an official warning.”</p> <p><b>RATIONALE:</b> Establishing this definition will ensure that coaches and umpires are aware of what constitutes an official warning prior to an ejection occurs.</p>
Rule 2-26 A.R. 6; Rules 3-1	<p>Add administrative ruling that will be place in two areas, Rule 2-26 as A.R. 6 and Rule 3-1 as A.R.1. The A.R. will read “When the head coach has been ejected and is replaced by a substitute head coach, the substitute head coach has all the duties, rights and responsibilities accorded to the original head coach. However, should the substitute head coach be ejected, they shall serve a one-game suspension in addition to his ejection.”</p> <p><b>RATIONALE:</b> The substitute head coach is entitled to the rights and duties of the head coach, for the purposes of making lineup changes and communicate with umpires, this administrative ruling is intended to clarify that the suspension penalty required of players and assistant coaches for being ejected is still to be followed even in the event that the person is serving in the capacity of head coach.</p>
Rule 4-1 Note	<p>Include Note after Rule 4-1.c.3 “<i>Note:</i> Use of Alternate Baseballs – The umpire should be the sole judge of whether the ball should be checked and should certainly do so if the ball has bounced off equipment or a fence/wall, if it appears ‘discolored, scuffed or otherwise unsuitable for play,’ or if the pitcher requests a different ball as stated. Umpires do not need to routinely check the ball each time a ground ball is hit to the infield or each pitch that is not cleanly caught by the catcher. Weather and field conditions should be a factor in deciding when to check the ball.”</p> <p><b>RATIONALE:</b> This clarification is to assist in maintaining pace of play.</p>

Rule 4-5	<p>Add sentence to rule to read: “A local ground rule may be adopted where unusual conditions prevail if agreeable with the visiting team. <b><u>No ground rule shall conflict with the official playing rules.</u></b> Where teams do not agree, ground rules shall be determined by the umpires. It is recommended that ground rules be posted in each dugout.”</p> <p><b>RATIONALE:</b> Establishing ground rules that are in conflict with the playing rules creates competitive inequity from facility to facility.</p>
Rule 5-8-d	<p>Add A.R.: “When the winning run is scored in the last half-inning of a regulation game, or in the last half-inning of an extra inning, as the result of a base on balls, hit batter or any other play with the bases full which forces the batter and all other runners to advance without liability of being put out, the umpire shall not declare the game ended until the runner forced to advance from third has touched home plate and the batter-runner has touched first base. An exception will be made if fans rush onto the field and physically prevent the runner from touching home plate or the batter-runner from touching first base. In such cases, the umpires shall award the runner the necessary bases with no appeal allowed.</p> <p><b>RATIONALE:</b> This will allow umpires to simplify the administration of game-ending bases loaded situations to allow umpires to ensure that only the batter runner and the runner on third base have touched the next base safely.</p>
5-9-c A.R.	<p>Add language to A.R.: “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’ <b><u>if the game has not met the conditions of a regulation game.</u></b>”</p> <p><b>RATIONALE:</b> The current administrative ruling contradicts language in the rule. This additional language establishes that if a game meets the definition of a regulation game, even if the game has been agreed to be played under the halted-game rule, it would not revert to a no contest.</p>
Rule 8-2-d	<p>Amend Rule 8-2.d.1 to read “A batter <del>must attempt to avoid being hit by the pitch</del> <b><u>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:</u></b>”</p> <p><b>RATIONALE:</b> This clarification is intended to reduce the intentional act of batters attempting to be hit by the pitch by making a movement to contact the pitch. 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.</p>
Rule 8-7	<p>Rewrite 8-7 Collision Rule to read – “a) A runner attempting to score may not deviate from his direct pathway to the plate in order to initiate contact with the catcher (or other player covering home plate), or otherwise initiate an avoidable collision. If, in the judgment of the umpire, a runner attempting to score initiates contact with the catcher (or other player covering home plate) in such a manner, the umpire shall declare the runner out (regardless of whether the player covering home plate maintains possession of the ball). In such circumstances, the umpire shall call the ball dead, and all other base runners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the collision. If the runner slides into the plate in an appropriate manner, he shall not be adjudged to be in violation.</p>

	<p>Note: The failure by the runner to make an effort to touch the plate, the runner’s lowering of the shoulder, or the runner’s pushing through with his hands, elbows or arms, would support a determination that the runner deviated from the pathway in order to initiate contact with the catcher in violation of the Collision Rule 8-7, or otherwise initiated a collision that could have been avoided. A slide shall be deemed appropriate, in the case of a feet first slide, if the runner’s buttocks and legs should hit the ground before contact with the catcher. In the case of a head first slide, a runner shall be deemed to have slid appropriately if his body should hit the ground before contact with the catcher. If a catcher blocks the pathway of the runner, the umpire shall not find that the runner initiated an avoidable collision in violation of the Collision Rule.</p> <p>b) Unless the catcher is in possession of the ball, the catcher cannot block the pathway of the runner as he is attempting to score. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the catcher without possession of the ball blocks the pathway of the runner, the umpire shall call or signal the runner safe. Notwithstanding the above, it shall not be considered a violation if the catcher blocks the pathway of the runner in a legitimate attempt to field the throw, (e.g., in reaction to the direction, trajectory or the hop of the incoming throw, or in reaction to a throw that originates from the pitcher or drawn-in infielder). In addition, a catcher without possession of the ball shall not be adjudged to be in violation if the runner could have avoided the collision with the catcher (or other player covering home plate) by sliding.</p> <p>Note: A catcher shall not be deemed to have violated the Collision Rule unless he has both blocked the plate without possession of the ball (or when not in a legitimate attempt to field the throw), and also hindered or impeded the progress of the runner attempting to score. A catcher 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 catcher having blocked the plate. In addition, a catcher should use best efforts to avoid unnecessary and forcible contact while tagging a runner attempting to slide. Catchers who routinely make unnecessary and forcible contact with a runner attempting to slide (e.g., by initiating contact using a knee, shin guard, elbow or forearm) may be subject to being ejected.</p> <p><b>RATIONALE:</b> Provides further clarification regarding the application of the Collision Rule.</p>
Rule 9-1-a	<p>“The pitcher shall stand <b><u>with his chest and shoulders generally</u></b> facing the batter, with the pivot foot on or in front of and touching the pitcher’s plate with the other foot free.”</p> <p><b>RATIONALE:</b> Adding this language requiring the pitcher to face the batter with the chest and shoulders will allow base runners and umpires to clearly determine if the pitcher is in the windup or the set position.</p>
Rule 9-1-a, (9)	<p>Add number 9 to section 1 to read, “9) A pitcher shall not jump or push forward off the pitcher’s plate with his pivot foot and then bring his foot to the ground and make a second push-off to deliver the pitch.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. This is considered an illegal pitch and shall be called a balk with runners on base.</li> <li>b. A pitcher is not in violation if he pushes off the pitcher’s plate with the pivot foot and maintains consistent contact with the ground with the pivot foot without a second push-off from the ground.”</li> </ol>

	<p><b>RATIONALE:</b> This addresses situations where the pitcher gains an advantage by pushing off a second time closer to home plate.</p>
Rule 9-2-h	<p>Add language to h – “Tattoos on a pitcher’s body that a batter or umpire considers distracting must be legally covered.”</p> <p><b>RATIONALE:</b> This provides clarification for application of the rule.</p>
9-3-h	<p>Add A.R.: “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.”</p> <p><b>RATIONALE:</b> Provides clarification to current rule.</p>
Rule 9-4-a-A.R. 6	<p>Edit A.R. 6 to read: “During a free trip <b><u>or a time out to allow a substitution for the pitcher</u></b>, a defensive player may warm up another defensive player, provided it does not delay the game. The player warming up must be in the current lineup and remain in fair territory during the charged conference <b><u>or timeout</u></b>. For example, a bullpen catcher is not allowed to participate in this type of warm-up.”</p> <p><b>RATIONALE:</b> Editorial. Currently the A.R. refers to other defensive players warming up during a charged conference. The same restriction should apply during a pitching change. Players should remain on the field so the game can resume promptly after the timeout.</p>
6-1-d and alters 6-4-e	<p>Catch and Carry: “Each runner, other than the 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.”</p> <p><b>RATIONALE:</b> Making this change will reduce potential safety issues that can arise with plays that continue into out-of-play areas and allow for consistency of ground rules.</p>
Appendix E, Getting the Call Right	<p>Add “common practice” to Appendix E – E- A.R. 2. “Once umpires have determined a need to conference to review a play, they shall direct the head coach to return to the dugout or coaching box before the crew will begin their discussion. <b>Common Practice: The umpires shall notify the opposing head coach of the umpire’s decision to change the call before signaling their decision to the press box or crowd. Once the notification is made to the coach, the calling official will signal the final decision.</b></p> <p><b>RATIONALE:</b> By providing the coaches an explanation prior to an announcement after the umpires have conferenced or used review, the committee believes there will be a reduced number of additional arguments by coaches of the impacted team.</p>
Appendix E C-9 and C 10	<p>Add A.R. 1 following C-10 – “A.R. 1 – For purposes of applying the changing of a call of “catch” to “no catch” (Section 9) or “no catch” to “catch” (Section 10), a fair batted ball shall be considered “hit into the outfield” when it is hit into the outfield area beyond the nearest infielder. A line drive hit directly toward an infielder shall not meet the requirement for a potential change of the initial call.”</p>

	<p><b>RATIONALE:</b> Provides clarification as to where the “outfield” begins for purposes of umpires being permitted to conference or use instant replay.</p>
Appendix E C-9 and C-10	<p>Add A.R. 2 following C-10 – “A.R. 2 – A call of “no catch” within the infield can be change to a “catch” if there are one or more runners on base and the change to a “catch” results in the third out, or at any time with no base runners and the change affects the batter only.”</p> <p><b>RATIONALE:</b> Adds that situations of “no catch” to “catch” can be reviewed.</p>
Appendix E Getting the Call Right B	<p>Implement video instant replay for specific types of plays under the guidelines of Appendix E – Getting the Call Right. The following plays will be reviewable:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Deciding if a batted ball is fair or foul. The ball must first touch the ground or a fielder beyond the initial position of the first or third baseman.</li> <li>b. Deciding if a batted ball is either a ground rule double or a home run.</li> <li>c. Any catch or no catch in the outfield or foul territory.</li> <li>d. A call of “no catch” can be changed to “catch” within the infield only if it results in a third out with any runners on base, or any time with a batter runner only.</li> <li>e. Spectator interference.</li> <li>f. Deciding scoring plays at home plate inclusive of collisions (illegal and/or malicious slides) or time plays.</li> </ol> <p>The following criteria will be used by institutions and conferences using Instant Replay during the regular season:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A ruling on the field will only be changed if there is indisputable video evidence to reverse the call. Absent that evidence, the original ruling on the field will stand.</li> <li>b. Any use of instant replay must occur before the next pitch or play. If the replay is called for after a game ending play, it must be called before all umpires leave the field of play.</li> <li>c. The crew chief will make the determination to use instant replay. There is no “coaches challenge.” Under the provisions of Getting the Call Right, coaches have the ability to request a conference among the umpires.</li> <li>d. The video review area must be on the field level so that umpires must not walk through spectators to view the coverage. At least one umpire must remain on the field.</li> <li>e. During the video review the defensive team shall maintain their position on the field and may warm-up if desired. Offensive base runners and the on-deck hitter shall maintain their position. Other personnel shall remain in the dugout. Any defensive or offensive conferences will be charged as during any other part of the game.</li> <li>f. All equipment should be tested by appropriate personnel before each game.</li> <li>g. The final decision may not be argued by either coach.</li> <li>h. If the reversing of a call results in the need for decisions on the placement of base runners, the crew chief shall use his best judgment to determine their locations as if the call had been made correctly (with exception to placement prescribed by rule on catch/no catch reversals).</li> </ol>

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|  | <p>i. If a call has been changed, the crew chief, upon returning to the field, will notify both head coaches and the official scorer of the ruling.</p> |
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**RATIONALE:** Establish permissive rules to allow the use of video replay where capabilities are available as a supplement to Appendix E Getting the Call Right.