



NCAA BASEBALL RULES COMMITTEE

FINAL RULES CHANGES – EFFECTIVE FOR 2011 AND 2012 SEASONS

INTRODUCTION

On September 20, the Playing Rules Oversight Panel approved the following changes that were proposed by the Baseball Rules Committee after its July meeting.

One rules proposal was denied: The Division III experimental rule to allow reentry rules to be used when both teams agree. The Panel does not believe allowing divisional differences would be appropriate at this time.

1. SIGNIFICANT CHANGES.

Rule 1-13c, A.R. 2: Revise to read: **The pitcher's glove must be black or brown. ~~and may not contain white or gray lettering.~~**

Rationale: This clarifies that the overall color of the glove is the important piece. If the umpire believes that the logo or lettering is distracting, the glove shall be removed.

Rule 1-14d (Uniforms): A.R. – Neoprene Sleeves, if worn by a pitcher, must be covered by an undershirt.

Rationale: Several questions were presented to the rules committee in this area. The spirit and intent of this rule is to have the pitcher be dressed uniformly and not in such a way that might distract the batter.

Rule 2-18, Check Swing (Change to Half Swing): At the beginning of the definition, add: **An attempt by the batter to stop his forward motion of the bat on the swing and putting himself in jeopardy** ~~The 'half swing' might put the batter in jeopardy~~ **of a strike being called. The half swing shall be called a strike if the barrel head of the bat passes [delete--the front edge of home plate or] the batter's front hip.**

Rationale: This is more in line with other rules codes and is a more accurate depiction of what umpires use to determine this call.

Rule 2-50: Add to (3) on 6-3b (3): If the catcher's initial **throw** retires the runner and the batter does not strike out, the batter is not out and the interference is disregarded. The ball remains live and other runners may advance. **[add—If there is an attempt by the catcher to throw and the attempt is aborted due to an action by the offense, the ball becomes dead immediately, the batter is out and all runners return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch (TOP).**

Rationale: This change makes consistent the wording for 6-3b and 7-11f with 2-50.

Rule 2-54, Obstruction: *The act of a fielder who, while not in the possession of the ball ‘or not in the act of fielding the ball,’ impedes the progress of any runner.*

Remove the 3rd paragraph in 2-54 in its entirety. Replace with the following:

Type 1, Obstruction: When obstruction by a fielder is committed against a runner on which a play is being made, the umpire shall call “That’s obstruction” while pointing at the obstruction and then signal and call “Time.” The ball is dead immediately. All runners shall be awarded bases they would have reached had there been no obstruction. The obstructed runner shall be awarded at least one base beyond his last legally touched base prior to the obstruction.

Type 2 Obstruction: The second type of obstruction deals with cases when a runner is obstructed while no play is being made on him. This obstruction is to be signaled by the umpire by pointing at the obstruction and calling, “That’s obstruction.” The ball is NOT dead. The umpire shall allow play to continue until all action has ceased and then call “Time” and impose such penalties that will nullify the act of obstruction.

Delete A.R. under obstruction. Replace with A.R.’s 1-2-3-4 below.

A.R. 1: If the fielder is about to receive a thrown ball and the ball is in flight directly toward and near enough to the fielder so he must occupy his position to receive the throw, he may be considered “in the act of fielding the ball.”

A.R. 2: When a fielder has made an attempt to field a batted or thrown ball and has missed, he may no longer be considered “in the act” of fielding the ball.

A.R. 3: After a fielder has misplayed a batted ball and the ball is “within a step and a reach” the fielder is still considered “in the act.”

A.R. 4: On a pickoff play at any base, the defensive player must clearly have possession of the ball before blocking the base with any part of the defensive players’ body. The umpire will call “That’s obstruction” and then signal and call “Time.” The ball is dead immediately and the runner being played on is awarded one base beyond the last base he had attained prior to the obstruction.

Rationale: *This makes the NCAA obstruction rule the same as Major League Baseball’s. The committee believes this rule and application achieves the intent of the rule and is second nature to most in baseball.*

Rule 2-74, Tag: *The action of a fielder in touching a base with any part of the body while holding the ball securely and firmly in the hand or glove or touching a runner with the ball or with the glove while holding the ball securely and firmly in that hand or glove. **The fielder shall***

maintain or regain control of his body and if he drops the ball due to his lack of body control or control of the ball, it is not a tag. A voluntary release is substantive proof of complete control.

Rationale: Adds language to assist with the understanding of the tag play and what constitutes control of the ball when a fielder is making a tag.

Rule 3-6k: Umpire jurisdiction in regard to personal confrontations and unsportsmanlike conduct directed toward them begins when the umpires enter the game site and ends when the umpires have left the game site.

Rationale: Fully clarifies umpire jurisdiction.

Rule 5-2d: Revise to read: “After a home run . . . home plate has been touched. Team personnel, except for preceding base runners, shall not leave the warning track area in front of the dugout (a recommended minimum area of 15-feet) to congratulate the batter-runner and other base runners.

Rationale: Deleting shall not enter the dirt area at home plate to congratulate the batter-runner, reduces the amount of jockeying between offensive players and a catcher and/or the pitcher. It also reduces the possibilities for tensions to escalate between the competing teams.

Rule 5-4c, Penalty: Eliminate the wording that the appeal is lost. Revise to read: If it is an appeal, all fielders, other than the catcher, must be in fair territory to start an appeal play after “Time” has been called. If a fielder (other than the catcher) is in foul territory, the umpire should not put the ball in play. If the umpire inadvertently does so, there is no penalty (this is not a balk), nor does the defense lose its chance to appeal on the same runner once the ball is properly put back into play. A fielder may go into foul territory to back up an appeal play after the ball has been put into play.

Rationale: This clarifies the process to use during appeal plays.

Rule 7-2c (4): At the time the coach makes the pitching change, he shall indicate to the plate umpire the playing status of the removed pitcher.

PENALTY FOR 7-2C (4): Once the coach has reached the dugout, it is too late for the umpire to accept the coach’s change of moving the pitcher to a defensive position or allowing the pitcher to remain as the DH.

Rationale: To keep the pace of play moving, this change is being made to establish a pitching change decision by the coach and to eliminate unneeded delays.

Rule 8-3e, Keep rule as it is written but switch (1) and (2).

Make (1)—against a runner on which a play is being made. Make (2)—Against a runner on which a play is not being made.

(1) Against a runner on which a play is being made;

PENALTY—the umpire shall point at and call “That’s obstruction” and call “Time.” The ball is dead immediately. All runners shall be awarded the bases they would have reached had there been no obstruction.

(2) Against a runner on which a play is NOT being made;

Replace the present PENALTY WITH THE FOLLOWING:

PENALTY—the umpire will signal by pointing at the obstruction while calling loudly, “That’s obstruction!” The ball is NOT dead. The umpire shall allow the play to continue until all play has ceased, then call “time” and impose any penalties that will nullify the act of obstruction. Time shall not be called until all action has stopped and no further play is possible.

This second type of obstruction deals with the runner who is obstructed while no play is being made on him. Here are examples of this type of obstruction but are not all inclusive:

- a. B/R is obstructed when he is rounding first base while the ball is in the outfield.
- b. B/R is obstructed before reaching first on a ball hit to the outfield.
- c. Runner steals and the catcher’s throw is wild and goes into the outfield and the base runner is obstructed while the ball is loose in the outfield.
- d. Runner is obstructed while rounding third base on a hit to the outfield.
- e. Any other example where no play is being made directly on the runner at the moment he is obstructed.

Rule 8-3e, A.R. 1—On a pickoff play at any base, the defensive player must clearly have possession of the pickoff throw before blocking the base with any part of the defensive players’ body. The umpire will call, “time, that’s obstruction.” The ball is dead immediately and the runner being played on is awarded one base beyond the last base he had attained prior to the obstruction.

Remove the “NOTE” and replace with this note:

NOTE: If a runner is obstructed under this second section of the obstruction rule, play shall continue until its completion, even if it results in a play being made on the previously obstructed runner. If the play results in that runner being tagged out before he reaches the base he would have been awarded, the umpire shall call “Time” at the moment the runner is tagged out. The umpire shall then impose such penalties that would nullify the obstruction.

The crew may confer in order to determine what a reasonable award should be had obstruction no occurred.

Rationale: This makes the NCAA obstruction rule the same as Major League Baseball's. The committee believes this rule and application achieves the intent of the rule and is second nature to most in baseball.

Rule 8-5k Revised to read: The runner, including a runner in contact with a base, is hit while in fair territory by a batted ball before it has touched a fielder or has passed all infielders who have a chance to make a play on the ball, other than the pitcher.

Rationale: This will make this rule consistent with other areas of the rules book.

Rule 8-7, Collision Rule. SECTION 7. The rules committee is concerned about unnecessary and violent collisions with the catcher at home plate, and with infielders at all bases. The intent of this rule is to encourage base runners and defensive players to avoid such collisions whenever possible.

When there is a collision between a runner and a fielder who clearly is in possession of the ball, the umpire shall judge:

- a. If the defensive player blocks the base (plate) or base line with clear possession of the ball, the runner may make contact, slide into or make contact with a fielder as long as the runner is making a legitimate attempt to reach the base (plate). Contact above the waist that was initiated by the base runner shall not be judged as an attempt to reach the base or plate.
 - (1) The runner must make an actual attempt to reach the base (plate).
 - (2) The runner may not attempt to dislodge the ball from the fielder. Contact above the waist shall be judged by the umpire as an attempt by the runner to dislodge the ball.
 - (3) The runner must attempt to avoid a collision if he can reach the base without colliding.
 - (4) If the runner's path to the base is blocked and (1), (2), and (3) are fulfilled, it is considered unavoidable contact.

PENALTIES:

- (1) The runner must make an actual attempt to reach the base (plate).
If the runner attempted to dislodge the ball or initiated an avoidable collision, the runner shall be declared out, even if the fielder loses possession of the ball. The ball is dead and all other base runners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the interference.
- (2) The runner may not attempt to dislodge the ball from the fielder.
If the contact was flagrant or malicious before the runner's touching the plate, the runner shall be declared out and also ejected from the contest. The ball is immediately dead and all other base runners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the interference.
- (3) The runner must attempt to avoid a collision if he can reach the base without colliding.

If the contact was flagrant or malicious after the runner had touched the base (plate), the runner will be ruled safe and ejected from the contest. The ball is immediately dead and all other base runners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the interference. If this occurs at any base other than home, the offending team may replace the runner. If the contact was after a preceding runner had touched home plate, the preceding runner will be ruled safe. The ball is immediately dead and all other base runners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the contact.

- (4) If the runner's path to the base is blocked and (1), (2), and (3) are fulfilled, it is considered unavoidable contact.

Rationale: This additional wording assists umpires and teams to better understand the responsibilities of the runner and fielder in situations when a collision occurs.

Rule 9-1a, A.R. 1—When a pitcher is on the rubber with his hands together, prior to any natural movement that commits the pitcher to pitch, he may move his hand within his glove to adjust the ball. Should the pitcher separate his hands while in contact with the rubber, a balk shall be called.

Rule 9-1a, A.R. 2—A pitcher may pause during his delivery from the windup position without penalty.

Rationale (previous two rules): This change is being made to address some areas of the country where a balk has been called when a pitcher was not making a motion to start the windup or natural delivery. These approved rulings clear up any confusion.

Rule 9-2c: Pace of Play. With the bases unoccupied, the pitcher shall deliver the ball within 20 seconds after receiving the ball. Add penalty to 9-2c: **PENALTY: After a team warning, a ball will be called each time the rule is violated.** A.R.—Coaches are prohibited from arguing a 20-second rule violation. A warning is given and an ejection of the head coach on subsequent violations.

Rationale: To address pace of play concerns.

Rule 9-2i: Procedure between innings. For non-televised games, teams will be allowed a maximum of 90 seconds between half-innings. For televised games, it is recommended that the time between each half-inning will be 108-seconds between each half inning. For games being played under a television agreement, the time between innings may be extended by contract. The clock starts when the last defensive player has crossed the foul line nearest his dugout and stops when the pitcher begins his pitching motion. In the case of an injury or an ejection of the pitcher, the umpire-in-chief shall allow the relief pitcher an adequate time to warm-up.

PENALTY for i: A ball will be called when the defense violates and a strike will be called when the offense violates.

Rationale: *The time between innings, in some cases, is a cause of longer game times. Timing and making this sequence consistent will assist in the overall administration of the game.*

2. EDITORIAL CHANGES.

Rule 1-2b: Revise, recommending the color of foul poles as **fluorescent yellow for new construction or for the repainting of existing foul poles.**

Rule 2-26: Add—**Post-Participation** to the title to read: 2-26: Ejection and Post Participation Ejection.

Add at the beginning of the definition: The immediate removal (or disqualification) of a player or coach from any further participation from the on-going or current game. [Add to Appendix D]

A Post Participation Ejection is applicable to the next scheduled contest(s).

Rationale: This clarifies that the ejection rule is only applicable to the current game and not any future contest and a Post Participation ejection is for the next scheduled game. This clarification also makes a definite distinction between an ejection and a suspension.

Rule 2-39: Delete the word **called** so that it reads: Halted Game; Section 39. A game that is stopped at any time after its start and is to be completed at a later date.

Add: A.R.—as it applies to a halted game, the game starts when the UIC calls “play” [Rule 5-1]; Call or indicates “Play” to start the game. [Rule 3-7a]

Rationale: To clarify when a game starts as it applies to the “Halted Game” rule [5-9a].

Rule 2-73, Suspension: Add definition: The prohibition of a player or coach from participating in a future contest(s). If the penalty is not satisfied during the current season, it shall be assessed at the beginning of the next official NCAA spring season.

Rule 3-8d: Revise to read: (Delete the word Base)—Umpires shall require **coaches and all personnel** to remain in the dugout or dead-ball territory while the ball is in play. **No coach or team personnel shall leave the dugout until the ball is dead.**

Rule 5-2f: Nonuniformed team personnel may sit in the stands for the purpose of charting pitches, **using radar guns**, or videotaping a contest.

A.R. 2—in-stadium pitch-speed monitors may be used in all games.

Rationale: Adding the A.R. 's clarifies when and by whom that radar guns and/or pitch speed monitors may be used.

Rule 5-5c: Delete the last two sentences to make this rule consistent with 7-2c. [**Delete:** However, offensive changes can be made only when a team is on offense and can take place only during that half inning. Likewise, defensive changes can be made only when the team is in the field.]

Rule 5-16, 2nd paragraph—When applying this rule, penalties shall carry over from fall to spring, from the regular season to the post season, **and from past season to the upcoming season.**

Rule 5-16, 3rd Paragraph, Discussion: Further, suspended player(s) shall be **(delete—restricted to the designated spectator areas and)** prohibited from any communication with the team...

Rule 5-16d (1): Add: A.R., **A game must be played to its completion before it counts toward a suspension. A game that is scheduled, but not played due to weather, power failure, etc. shall not be used to satisfy a suspension(s).**

"Any orchestrated activities that dugout personnel may do during a game that are designed to distract, intimidate, or disconcert the opposing team or reflect upon poor sportsmanship or is abusive shall not be allowed."

Rule 6-1 (1): Revise “live ball” to **live-ball.**

Rule 6-3b Penalties: Add after: **See 7-11f, [with exceptions, (1) – (4)]**

Rule 6-4d: (delete so as to delay play.) Any ball that sticks in a fence or padding is immediately dead.

Rule 7-1b: [Add] A.R. 2, **coaches shall not be allowed to argue when an umpire refuses to grant time to a batter per Rule 7-1b.**

Penalty: Warning, to be followed by an ejection.

Rule 7-4e: Revise to read: “A legal pitch **that is in the strike zone** and that touches the batter, **regardless of whether he swings or not,** the ball is immediately dead, **the pitch is a strike,** no runners may advance, **and the batter is not awarded first base.”**

Rule 7-11j: An infield fly is declared (delete—or undeclared.) (See Rule 2—Infield Fly, DELETE “undeclared”);

Rule 7-11s: [Revise to read, 2nd paragraph] *with fewer than two outs, the umpire shall call “strike three,” the ball is dead and the run counts; all other runners return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.*

Rule 8-2d: Revise to read: *d. When hit by a pitched ball at which the individual is not attempting to strike, the ball is immediately dead.*

- (1) *If the batter is hit by a pitch in the strike zone, regardless of whether he swings at it or not, the ball is immediately dead,* the pitch is a strike, no runners may advance and the batter is not awarded first base.
- (2) *If the batter makes no attempt to avoid being touched by the pitch and the pitch is out of the strike zone, the pitch shall be called a ball, the ball is immediately dead, no runners*

may advance and the batter is not awarded first base. If the batter intentionally gets touched by moving or rolling any part of his body into the pitch and the batter does not swing, the ball is immediately dead; the umpire shall call a strike or ball in accordance with 7-4b and 7-5a.

- (3) If the batter makes no attempt to avoid being touched by the pitch and the pitch is out of the strike zone, the pitch shall be called a ball. The ball is immediately dead, the batter is not awarded first base and no runners may advance unless the pitch is ball four.

Rule 8-1a, A.R. Add to this rule: All base runners must touch their advance base.

Rule 9-2c, Insert a new penalty: After a warning a ball will be called each time a pitcher violates this rule. Eliminating “team” from this warning and penalty.

Rule 9-2d, delete: “for c.,” so the penalty is only applicable to letter d.

Rule 9-2e: Rosin Bag. Add the following approved rulings:

A.R. 3—the home team shall supply a rosin bag prior to the start of each game.

A.R. 4—a batted or thrown ball is in play after it hits the rosin bag. In the case of wet weather, the umpire may request the pitcher put the rosin bag in his pocket. The pitcher may apply rosin to his bare hand/hands. The ball may not be dusted with rosin from the bag or with the rosin bag. Rosin from the bag may not be applied to the glove or to any part of the pitcher’s uniform.

PENALTY for A.R. 4: Warning on the first offense; ejection from the game on the second offense.

Rule 9-2i: Edit wording for Pitch Clock: At the beginning of an inning, throw more than five pitches to the catcher. A relief pitcher is allowed eight pitches, but these pitches shall not consume more than 90 (non-televised) or 108-seconds (televised game). Should the clock expire, the relief pitcher will be allowed to complete their eight warm-up pitches. In case of an injury or an ejection of the pitcher, the umpire-in-chief shall allow the relief pitcher an adequate time to warm-up.

9-2i: Procedure between innings: Fourth line: The clock starts with the last out of the inning and stops when the pitcher begins his pitching motion.

PENALTY for i.--After a warning, a ball shall be called for each violation of this rule.

Rule 9-3m (1): New A.R.—After a balk that is followed by a base hit, a runner who misses the first base to which the runner is advancing and who, prior to the next pitch, is called out on appeal, shall be considered as having advanced one base for the purpose of this rule.

APPENDIX F

PITCH/BETWEEN INNINGS CLOCK PROTOCOL

TIMING DEVICES

To be in compliance with this rule and to implement this protocol, conferences may choose to instruct on-field umpires to use a timing device (e.g., stopwatch). To be clear, the intent of the rules committee is not to mandate a visible clock.

20-SECOND PITCH CLOCK LIMIT

1. The 20-second time limit (or clock) starts when the pitcher receives the ball on the mound and stops when the pitcher begins his pitching motion. The time limit (or clock) is used only when the bases are unoccupied. If a pitcher violates the 20-second rule he shall be warned by the umpire. After a pitcher is warned, if he continues to violate the rule a ball will be awarded for each violation. There is one warning per pitcher.
2. A pitcher stepping off the rubber does not stop the time limit (or clock) unless the umpire grants the pitcher time.
3. The time (or clock) is paused for the pitcher to reach the mound area if the pitcher is out of the 18-foot circle for the purpose of making or backing up a play. The time (or clock) is paused if a player is returning to his position (a batter- runner returning to the plate after a foul ball or a fielder returning after attempting to field a foul ball). If the catcher holds the ball and does not throw it back IMMEDIATELY to the pitcher, the time (or clock) will start. If a batter runs on a foul ball, the time (or clock) will not start until he returns to the dirt area of the plate, unless he delays his return. Common sense delays, such as but not limited to, when a player asks for time to tie his shoes, clean his glasses, etc., the time (or clock) is paused but clock should resume when the umpire signals "play." The player in question does not get a reset of the full 20-seconds.
4. A strike results if the batter is not in the box ready to take the pitch with five seconds or less showing on the clock and time expires. When there is a timing or clock violation, no pitch will result and either a ball or strike is called depending on the violation and any ensuing play is nullified. Following a team warning, if a coach, student-athlete, manager or any other non playing personnel argues any penalty or timing procedure they are subject to immediate ejection. The head coach is allowed to bring a clock malfunction or misapplication of protocol to the umpire's attention.

Coaches, student-athletes and umpires are to adhere to Rule 7-1c as written related to the Batter's Box Rule.

- A.R.—Umpires are to enforce this rule as written. If the line(s) of the batter's box have been erased, the umpire shall require that upon the batter's initial stance, both feet are to be no closer than six (6) inches from the inside edge of home plate.

A penalty is not automatic when the batter is not in the batter's box with five seconds or less showing, as long as play continues without a visible signal or there is no violation.

5. The time (or clock) is paused if the batter is granted time by the umpire with five or more seconds showing on the clock. The request for time by the batter must be for legitimate reasons and is not to be granted if the request is to delay the game. Unless unusual circumstances warrant, time will not be granted to the batter with less than five seconds remaining.

If the pitcher and batter are in position when the time (or clock) reaches zero, the umpire will call "TIME" before awarding the ball or strike.

In judging guilt, if neither the pitcher nor batter is ready, the pitcher is responsible. A batter does not have to be ready to hit when the pitcher is off the rubber. A batter must not be allowed to get ready to hit just before the five-second limit, and then request time. He may be granted time if the pitcher holds him too long in his batting position.

6. If the time limit expires at the same time the pitcher begins his windup, there is no penalty and any signal is ignored
7. The 20-second time limit is in effect for the entire game (extra innings included).

It is the plate umpires' job to administer the clock and any penalties when there is a visible clock in the outfield. If there is no visible clock in the outfield the clock is kept by the base umpire.

8. When resuming the time clock, the umpire will point the ball back in play. When resetting the time or clock is necessary, the plate umpire will signal with a hand held high above the head and rotated in a horizontal arc.

BETWEEN INNINGS FOR THE 90-108-SECOND TIME LIMIT (OR CLOCK)

1. If there are unusual circumstances that prevent either team from getting on or off the field, other common sense delays such as ceremonies or field maintenance not the fault of the teams, or an injury the time clock is delayed until players have had an opportunity to begin to move to their positions. Otherwise, the time (clock) starts when the last defensive player has crossed the foul line nearest his dugout and stops when the pitcher begins his windup for the first pitch to the first batter of the inning. If the offensive team is not ready within the 90-second or 108-second time limit, the umpire shall call a strike. If the defense is not ready, a ball shall be awarded to the batter.
2. For non-televised games (Internet streaming does not qualify), teams have 90-seconds to be ready to pitch and to have a batter ready to step into the batter's box after the end of each half-inning. At the beginning of a game for a starting pitcher or for any subsequent relief pitcher, the clock should start when they begin their first warm up pitch; however, by rule

they are entitled to eight pitches without penalty. Should the clock expire, they will be allowed to complete their eight warm up pitches.

3. For televised games the time shall be 108 seconds between each half-inning unless specified by NCAA or Conference contract provisions. The home institution will notify the visiting team and umpires if there will be an extension of the 108-second provision.
4. With 30-seconds left, the base umpire will visually cue the plate umpire who will then signal to the pitcher and catcher, "30 seconds left" (usually enough time for two warm up pitches) and summon the lead-off batter to the plate.
5. Continuing pitchers shall have the 90- to 108-second time limit to complete their five warm-up pitches.
6. If the catcher is the 3rd out or on base when the 3rd out is made, the offensive team should have someone ready to warm-up the pitcher. Umpires will not grant additional warm-ups if the 90- or 108-second time limit expires. In the event that the catcher was on base or the last to bat: if the catcher is not out at the "30 seconds left" reminder, (another player is warming up the catcher) then you are to hold the pitcher up with one pitch left and wait on the game catcher to arrive. This will allow the game catcher to throw the ball down.
7. Following a team warning, if a coach, student-athlete, manager or any non-playing personnel argues any penalty or timing procedure, they are subject to immediate ejection. The head coach is allowed to bring a clock malfunction or misapplication of the protocol to the umpire's attention.
8. The 90 or 108- second pitch clock rule is enforced even if a coach/player continues to argue an inning ending play and the clock expires.

LOCATION OF THE CLOCK

Each Conference will determine if a visible clock will be used for all games or conference games only and if the time clock will be kept by the umpire crew on the field. If a conference determines to use a visible clock, the clock shall be positioned on the outfield scoreboard or atop the outfield fence either in left or right centerfield. The clock should be readily visible to the batter, catcher and home plate umpire.

Individual schools within a conference are not to determine if they will install a visible clock. If a conference does not approve that a visible clock will be used for all games or conference games only, the time limits are to be kept by the umpires on the field.

PERSONNEL TO OPERATE THE CLOCK

Each Conference is responsible for developing guidelines for training qualified individuals to operate the clock during games.

NO VISIBLE CLOCK AVAILABLE OR MALFUNCTION OF THE CLOCK

If the time clock malfunctions, time will be kept on the field by the 2nd base umpire in a four-man or six-man crew; 3rd base umpire in a three-man crew; and the base umpire in a two-man crew.

2011-12 Points of Emphasis

Generally, the committee believes the rules as written are sound and directs coaches and umpires to adhere to these rules without exception. The entire baseball community (student-athletes, coaches, administrators, game managers) has a responsibility to participate in the game in a respectful manner. The following two points are items the committee believes require additional attention and consideration:

Coach/Umpire Philosophy.

The committee reviewed several proposals that dealt with communication between coaches and umpires. While this relationship has generally improved in recent seasons, the committee continues to be concerned with some negative incidents that could hurt the image of the game. The committee believes responsibility for improving this relationship lies with coaches, umpires and administrators equally.

For the sport to continue to thrive as it has, coaches and umpires need to continue to engage in healthy discussion and explanation of the rules without creating unneeded delays in the game and unsporting conduct. Extended arguments, vulgar language and disrespectful conduct by coaches or umpires must not be tolerated. Coaches are particularly reminded that the Code of Ethics includes a statement that forbids arguing judgment calls by the umpire.

The committee will continue to monitor these situations closely and will consider rules changes in the future if warranted.

Managing At-Bats

The committee believes improvement is needed with the pace of the game, particularly the batter stepping out of the box in conflict with current rules. Umpires in some cases are diligent in adhering to these rules, which are intended to maintain a consistent pace of play and eliminate unneeded delays. Consistency in this area is needed, however, and the committee instructs umpires to strictly enforce these rules and asks coaches and student-athletes to adhere without exception.