



## 2016 and 2017 NCAA Softball Rules Changes and Common Practice Updates

*The following rules changes were approved by the NCAA Softball Rules Committee and the Playing Rules Oversight Panel. They will be incorporated into the rules book for the 2016 and 2017 seasons.*

Rule	Major Changes	Rules	Common Practice Updates
	<i>No changes</i>		<p><i>Reminder to send requests for waivers/accommodations... Requests for documentation of disability or religious accommodations or rule exceptions should be sent via email to the Secretary-Rules Editor.</i></p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> To avoid on-field questions, documentation for rule exceptions such as wearing skorts/skirts, special caps with hearing aids or the use of signers for hearing impaired participants have always been provided by SREs but previously not publicized within the rule book.</p>
Rule 1	Major Changes		Common Practice Updates
Rule 1.36 Also 1.21, 9.4.1, 9.5.2.1, 9.5.2.4, 12.12.6.1, 12.15	<p><i>Changes the definition of obstruction...</i></p> <p>The act of a defensive team member that hinders or impedes a batter’s attempt to make contact with a pitch or that impedes the progress of a runner who is legally running the bases, unless the fielder is in possession of the ball, is fielding a batted ball or is <b>in the act of catching</b> a thrown ball. The act may be intentional or unintentional and applies to live ball action only.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Replaces “about to receive” with “in the act of catching” to better define the specific protected action. “About to receive” is a longer time frame than being “in the act of catching” a thrown ball.</p>	1.14	<p><i>Concerning the definition of dead ball, add...</i></p> <p><b>A dead ball cannot be revived and brought back to life. It remains dead</b> until an umpire indicates resumption of play.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> In the interest of “getting the call right”, some umpires have received information from their partners and wanted to change their call and use their judgement in placing base runners. The NSRC continues to be concerned about their assessments of runners speed and fielders throwing strengths/accuracy so it continues to maintain the long time tradition of keeping dead balls dead.</p>
		1.45	<p><i>Regarding the definition of play, add...</i></p> <p><b>1.45.1</b> An attempt by a defensive player on a batted or thrown ball to retire <b>an offensive player</b>.</p> <p><b>1.45.2</b> A play can also refer to an action by a pitcher to elicit a reaction from the runner(s) as it pertains to the look-back rule.</p> <p><b>1.45.3</b> A pitch is not a play except as it relates to an appeal play. (See Rule 7.1)</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Adds to the definition of “play”.</p>

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Rule 2	Major Changes	Common Practice Updates
New 2.1	<p><i>Regarding artificial turf...</i>                      A synthetic turf surface field may be used for collegiate competition. It is recommended that the outfield portion be green and, if there is an infield portion, it be brown and have shorter blades than the outfield portion.  <i>Note-it is still highly recommended that a skinned infield be used (See Rule 2.14).</i></p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Provides direction to those considering an artificial infield or outfield surface.</p>	No changes
2.2	<p><i>Regarding the backstop padding as noted in past rulebooks...</i>                      When the backstop is wood, cement or brick, it shall be padded from dugout to dugout....</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Changes a recommendation (which was approved in 2011) to a requirement which goes into effect for the 2016 season.</p>	
2.10	<p><i>Regarding enclosing the field side of the dugout...</i>                      It is highly recommended that the field side of the dugout be protected with netting or fencing no less than 6 feet from the floor of the dugout except for the designated entrances/exits. Protection is required by the 2018 season.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Creates a separation of players and field. In addition, this change will keep more errant throws in play and reduce the number of awarded bases. Finally, the netting/fencing will provide protection from foul batted balls and errant throws to those in the dugout. Note that the old last sentence (Consideration should be given to enclose the field side of dugouts with netting or fencing) will be deleted by 2018.</p>	

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<p>2.12</p>	<p><i>Regarding the foul pole color and height...</i></p> <p>The foul pole shall be a <b>single color</b> pole that extends vertically upward... The pole should extend a minimum of ten, or the recommended height of at least twenty, feet from the ground...</p> <p>In addition, it is recommended that the color of the foul pole should contrast <b>not only the ball but also</b> with the background so it will stand out, preferably white or optic orange.</p> <p><b>Beginning in 2018, foul poles on institutional fields shall be a minimum of ten feet high and shall be either white or optic orange.</b></p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Clarifies that the pole shall be a single color, preferably white or optic orange, to enhance the umpire's ability to correctly rule on a batted ball near the pole. There is a phase in time for replacing a short pole with a taller one as well as the requirement for white or optic orange.</p>		
<p>New 2.17.2 Also 12.12.3.7, 12.12.8.5</p>	<p><i>Regarding alternative, non-traditional fields...</i></p> <p><b>When playing on a non-regulation field (i.e. a dome or multiuse facility) due to weather conditions, the field should have minimum fence distances as noted in Rule 2.11. If the actual fence distances are shorter and a fly, fair batted ball clears this distance, the batter shall be awarded a ground rule double, not a home run, and each base runner advanced two bases.</b></p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Many makeshift facilities are too short to meet the minimum home run fence distances so in an effort to more closely reflect what would have happened had the field been regulation and to not skew player/team statistics, this clarifies that a ground rule double is awarded rather than an out-of-the-park home</p>		

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	run. Note this is to provide guidance for the alternative fields pressed into use due to weather conditions only.		
Old 2.22; table; diagrams; 12.2.8; 12.13.2; 12.19.1.3.2 and note 2; 12.25; App A	<p><i>Deletes the runner's lane as a required line on the field and all its references.</i></p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> This change only changes the look of the field but has no effect on the batter-runner's responsibility to not interfere with the fielder receiving the throw at first base and she still cannot deviate from her basepath nor move backward if a fielder is attempting a tag play.</p> <p>However, because coaches do not teach the inefficiency of having their batter-runners (especially slappers) hit the pitch, run to the lane, and then veer back to fair territory to touch first base, the runner's lane has become an unnecessary line on the field.</p>		
2.25	<p><i>Creates an effect for a fielder making a play while stepping on a tarp...</i></p> <p>EFFECT -If a fielder <b>steps on</b> the tarp, she will be considered to have entered dead-ball territory.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> There has been no effect listed for this rule violation.</p>		
Rule 3	Major Changes		Common Practice Updates
3.3.1.3 Also 5.4.1	<p><i>Deletes the umpire's use of bat rings to determine if a bat is damaged.</i></p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Eliminates the unnecessary rule as umpires have not used bat rings for years as they inspect bats for damage.</p>	3.3.2 EFFECT also 11.16.3 EFFECT	<p><i>Regarding the use of an inappropriate bat, add to second paragraph...</i></p> <p>...the batter shall be declared out and ejected and base runners <b>not put out on the batted ball return to the bases occupied at the time of the pitch.</b></p> <p><b>Currently:</b> Second paragraph: ...and base runners <del>shall not advance.</del></p> <p>New third paragraph: <b>If a batter has completed her turn at bat</b></p>
3.3.1.8.5	<p><i>Regarding the color of the barrel of the bat...</i></p> <p>...It shall be <b>of color(s) contrasting to the ball</b>, round and smooth to 0.05 inches in diameter...</p>		

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	<p><b>Rationale:</b> This change was first distributed to coaches and manufacturers prior to the start of the 2015 season as a request to not use bats with yellow barrels so that fielders would continue to be able to visually pick up the batted ball. At the time, there was no bat model routinely produced with an optic yellow barrel although custom bats could be ordered with any color barrel.</p>		<p>using the inappropriate bat and after the first pitch to the next batter, if the bat can be positively identified, it shall be removed from the team's possession, the batter who used the bat shall be declared out and ejected, but any advance by base runners shall stand.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> This third paragraph was inadvertently left out from previous year's rule books.</p>
3.6.1	<p><i>Deletes that the pitcher's glove and its lacing shall be tan, brown, gray, white or black or any combination of those colors.</i></p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Eliminates the restriction regarding the color of the pitcher's glove so they now are the same as fielder's gloves.</p>	3.3.4.1.1	<p><i>New statement regarding coaches' responsibility for pre-game bat check...</i></p> <p><i>New e. have the bat list readily available throughout the game.</i></p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> In case of a challenge regarding the listing of a model, coaches shall have their list available throughout the game, not just pre-game.</p>
3.7.1	<p><i>Regarding the finish on helmets ...</i>  <i>...All helmets shall be the same color and may not be a highly reflective, mirror-like chrome finish.</i></p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The NSRC previously issued an interpretation that the highly reflective, mirror-like chrome finishes on helmets was not appropriate due to the distracting reflection of light. It is the committee's opinion that eliminating these gold, silver and bronze helmets minimizes injury risk to fielders.</p>	New 3.8	<p><i>Creates a new category and reorganizes some existing sections...</i></p> <p><i>Optional Protective Equipment... Optional protective equipment is those items not required by rule but worn or used by personal choice. In all cases, they shall be worn or used as intended by the manufacturer.</i></p> <p>Topics are old uniform accessories sections: casts/braces etc (3.5); defensive headgear (3.8.2), elbow/knee pads (3.10.6), foul weather (3.10.2) sliders (3.10.9). And adds an effect for non-compliance.</p> <p><b>Rationale-</b> divides required and equipment used/worn by personal choice</p>
3.10.2	<p><i>Deletes that plastic visors, bandanas and handkerchiefs are not allowable headgear even if covered or worn under a cap or helmet.</i></p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Eliminates the restriction on headgear which already allows caps and visors (by rule) as well as headbands of all kinds and bows (by not mentioning them). The NSRC feels they pose no physical risk and do not impact the image of the game negatively.</p>	New 3.8 EFFECT	<p><i>Creates an effect for the newly created category above...</i></p> <p><b>EFFECT-</b> If possible, the player shall remove the item upon request of the umpire. If impossible or the player chooses not to comply with the umpire's request, she may be substituted for or ejected from the game. (Admin ejection see Rule 13.2.3</p>

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Rule 4	Major Changes		Common Practice Updates
4.9 EFFECT	<p><i>Regarding the effect for spectator interference...</i> ...If the act clearly prevented a fielder from catching a fly ball in the field of play, the ball is dead, the batter is out, and the umpire shall award the appropriate compensation (for example, return base runners to bases, an out, or advance a runner) that, in his or her opinion, would have resulted had interference not taken place.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Deletes wording about compensation for the offended team to allow the umpire to judge what is appropriate for both teams. For example without this change, if a spectator interfered with a fly ball that clearly would have been a sacrifice fly, the out would be declared but the runner not awarded home.</p>		<p><b>Rationale:</b> Previously, there has not been an effect for a violation.</p> <p><i>No changes</i></p>
Rule 5	Major Changes		Common Practice Updates
5.9.1	<p><i>Creates an exception regarding streaming video in a tournament...</i> Exception: A tournament host may stream video of all games in its tournament and are not restricted to filming and streaming video of only games in which it is a participant.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Allows tournaments hosts to provide streaming of all the tournament games to enhance the S-A experience by allowing family and friends to watch and to provide scouting opportunities for coaches.</p>	5.9.3 EFFECT	<p><i>Creates an effect if the home team is unable to accommodate the visitor's camera...</i> If the visiting team cannot be suitably accommodated, neither team shall video.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Because the use of electronic equipment has changed significantly, a new effect is needed to cover unequal space accommodations.</p>
5.11	<p><i>Regarding the definition of artificial noisemakers and warnings...</i> In addition to inserting the definition (see CPU opposite), changes "issue a warning to the offending individual" to "issue a team warning" in the effect and</p>	5.11	<p><i>Provides the definition for noisemakers in the rule book...</i> Objects used to make noise or amplify sound to show support, approval or opposition to playing action other than body parts are considered artificial noisemakers. The use of musical instruments or misuse of equipment to make noise are addressed separately in Rules 5.13 and 13.6.2 respectively.</p>

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	changes it from an administrative to behavioral ejection.  <b>Rationale:</b> These allow the umpire to warn a team one time rather than issue multiple warnings to specific individuals. In addition, it is more appropriately a behavioral rather than administrative issue.		<b>Rationale:</b> Umpires are not always privy to the NCAA Bylaws and interpretations so have no knowledge of what artificial noisemakers are across sports and specific to softball. This addition gives them that information and references additional resources.
Rule 6	Major Changes		Common Practice Updates
6.19.1.9 Also 8.3.4.1.7	<p><i>Regarding further participation by a person serving a suspension...</i></p> <p>If an ejected or suspended person is discovered to be participating again.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Includes someone serving a suspension in the prohibition to participate further in a game.</p>	6.2.3 new Note	<p><i>Adds a note for easy determination regarding an out and when to score a run...</i></p> <p><i>Note: For ease in determining if a run scores on an inning ending play, account for all force outs before scoring any runs. If the third out is attained via force out, no runs will score.</i></p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Provides an additional tool for determining if a run should score.</p>
		6.3.1	<p><i>Deletes the last sentence regarding the score of called game... ...In this case, the score shall be the minimum number of runs needed to win the game except noted in Rule 14.6.1. See also Rule 14.5</i></p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The score may be more than the minimum due to base awards therefore this sentence is not always true.</p>
		6.16.4.1	<p><i>Provides an explanation of what a drop dead time is... ...The head coaches are required to agree on either a mandatory drop-dead time (in which case the playing action ceases the next time the ball becomes dead and the game outcome is determined as in Rule 6.3 or if tied, 6.14) or a time at which no new inning will begin...</i></p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Clarification needed because several coaches think if they are ahead at the drop dead time, they win even if the home team has not yet batted in their half inning.</p>

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		6.17.5	<p><i>Provides an additional circumstance for declaring “no game.”</i></p> <p>Halted games of less than regulation length that are not resumed shall be declared “no game”.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Clarification needed to allow teams with unfinished halted games to declare them no game in order to schedule a replacement while staying under the maximum number of allowable games.</p>
		6.18	<p><i>Reiterates the information above in 6.17.5 under different heading...</i></p> <p>No game” shall be declared by the umpire if he/she terminates play before five innings have been completed by each team or if a halted game of less than five innings is not resumed.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> See above in 6.17.5</p>
Rule 7	Major Changes		Common Practice Updates
	No changes	7.2.5.1 Also 7.2.6.1	<p><i>Regarding the process to be followed for protests...</i></p> <p>The protesting coach shall first identify the alleged failure to apply the correct rule, effect or misapplication of a rule. The opposing coach then may provide input followed by the crew privately collaborating to attempt to settle the dispute. These steps should be done in a timely, professional and nonconfrontational manner using an NCAA Softball Rule and Interpretations Book. Lastly, the crew brings both coaches together to explain its ruling with one final opportunity to use a rules book or phone the SRE to determine the on-field resolution.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Clarification of the process as outlined in the April memo to coaches.</p>
Rule 8	Major Changes		Common Practice Updates
	No changes	New 8.2.4.3	<p><i>Clarifies substitutions for an inactive flex...</i></p> <p>The flex may be substituted for at any time by a player off the bench. If the flex is inactive (because the DP has been</p>

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			<p>playing both offense and defense), a substitute may be entered in the 10<sup>th</sup> spot on the lineup card without first re-entering the flex.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Once the game begins with 10 spots in the batting order, a coach may substitute into any of those spots. A game starting with the DP/Flex will always have 10 spots for a coach's use; not contracted to nine.</p>
		8.3.3 Note 3 & Note 2 page 83	<p><i>Clarifies when the catcher is considered to have made a play...</i></p> <p>If the player in violation is the pitcher or catcher, delivering or receiving a pitch is considered making a play.</p> <p><b>Currently:</b> If the player in violation is the pitcher, delivering a pitch is considered making a play.</p>
		8.5.1.1	<p><i>Adds a necessary caveat to when a player may be substituted for...</i></p> <p>Any player may be substituted for at any time when the ball is dead as long as she immediately participates in the game. Projected substitutions and re-entries are not allowed.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Clarifies that a substitute must immediately participate in the game to avoid it being a projected substitution.</p>
Rule 9	Major Changes		Common Practice Updates
	No changes	9.4.1 Second Note 2	<p><i>Regarding a rounding or returning violation on a ball that is ultimately foul...</i></p> <p>If a runner is obstructed while a batted ball is fair but subsequently becomes a foul ball, obstruction is nullified. If the violation is a rounding or returning obstruction, a warning will still be issued.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> To match the May 2014 interpretation that a warning is still issued in an effort to minimize this</p>

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Rule 10	Major Changes		Common Practice Updates
10.8 EFFECT Exception	<p><i>Regarding an illegal pitch, add...</i> If an illegal pitch occurs but the pitch is not released, it is an immediate dead ball.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Addresses the effect for a pitch never released.</p>	10.6.4	<p>unnecessary contact even when the batted ball is foul.</p> <p><i>Regarding the delivery of a pitch...</i> The release of the pitch and follow-through of the hand and wrist shall be forward.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> This change deletes the rest of the sentence “and past the straight line of the body” because certain pitchers throw certain pitches in such a way as it was not always true.</p>
10.10.5 Also 11.15.3.4	<p><i>Regarding a batter hit by a pitch before it reaches the plate area...</i> The batter is hit by a pitch that has not yet reached the front line of the batter’s box, assuming she did not swing or attempt to bunt.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The old rule references a pitch not yet reaching home plate but this change to the front of the batter’s box is more appropriate with the number of slappers in the game who don’t allow a pitch to get that deep.</p>		
10.14 Also 11.15.4 13.7.2	<p><i>Regarding intentionally pitching at a batter or an umpire, separate the two actions so there can be different effects...</i> 10.14.1 The pitcher shall not intentionally attempt to hit the batter with a pitch. <b>EFFECT—If, in the umpire’s judgment, such a violation has occurred, the umpire shall warn the pitcher, catcher and the head coach that future violations by any pitcher from his/her team will be cause for immediate ejection of the pitcher, catcher and the head coach. If, in the umpire’s judgment, the situation warrants drastic action to diffuse a potentially volatile situation, the umpire may eject the pitcher and catcher without warning. The head coach of the offending team may also be ejected at this time if the umpire believes it</b></p>		

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	<p>is appropriate. A warning may be issued to one or both teams before the start of the game or at any time during a game if the umpire believes it to be appropriate (Behavioral ejections; see Rules 13.2.1 and 13.7). <b>If the batter is hit by the pitch, the effect for hit by a pitch applies. (See Rule11.15)</b></p> <p>10.14.2 The pitcher shall not intentionally attempt to hit the umpire with a pitch.  <b>EFFECT—If, in the umpire’s judgment, such a violation has occurred, the umpire shall eject the pitcher, catcher and the head coach (Behavioral ejections; see Rules 13.2.1 and 13.7). In addition, the head coach shall be suspended from the institution’s next two previously scheduled and played contests in a traditional season (spring).</b></p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Leaves the effect as is for hitting the batter but separates out the effect for hitting an umpire so there is no warning just an immediate ejection of the pitcher, catcher and coach and suspension of the head coach.</p>		
Rule 11	Major Changes		Common Practice Updates
11.21. EFFECT	<p><i>Regarding the effect for batter’s interference...</i>                  Delayed dead ball is signaled. The defensive team shall choose the result of the play or the batter is out and each base runner shall return to the base legally occupied at the time of the pitch.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> As with a violation for leaving early, the delayed dead ball gives the defense a chance to choose to keep the more advantageous play.</p>	11.4	<p><i>Adds a new note regarding a fair ball...</i>  <i>Note-A batted ball signaled to be fair may be changed to foul if additional information provided to the calling umpire is accepted.</i></p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Although this is not an issue, similar notes will be added to foul and dead balls indicating they cannot be changed to fair so this note is needed here.                  Adds a new note regarding a foul ball...</p>
		11.5 EFFECT	<p><i>Note-A batted ball declared foul may not be changed to fair regardless of the additional information available to the calling umpire.</i></p>

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			<p><b>Rationale:</b> In the interest of “getting the call right”, some umpires have received information from their partners and wanted to change a foul ball and then use their judgement in placing base runners. The NSRC continues to be concerned about their assessments of runners speed and fielders throwing strengths/accuracy so it continues to maintain the long time tradition of keeping foul balls foul.</p>
		<p>11.15.3.3 Also 11.22.14</p>	<p><i>Clarifies hitting a batter’s clothing constitutes hit by pitch...</i> The pitched ball touches any part of the batter’s person, including her hands or her clothing, as she swings and misses for a third strike.</p>
		<p>11.21.3 EFFECT Exception</p>	<p><b>Rationale:</b> Although loose fitting clothing is not desirable while batting, sometimes a pitch grazes clothing without hitting the batter’s person.</p> <p><i>Adds an exception to calling the runner closest to home out...</i> Delayed dead ball is signaled. The defensive team shall choose the result of the play or the base runner closest to home at the time of the interference shall be declared out. In addition, each other base runner shall return to the last base legally touched at the time of the interference. <i>Exception: If the batter struck out and is still in the batter’s box when she interferes with a catcher’s attempt to throw out a base runner, the base runner being played on, not the runner closest to home, is out.</i></p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> This change results in the runner being played on in a steal situation being declared out (rather than the runner closest to home) since the interference prevented the catcher from having a reasonable chance to put her out.</p>
Rule 12	Major Changes		Common Practice Updates
New 12.13.5	<p><i>Regarding the runner illegally taking out a defender...</i> The runner shall not slide out of the baseline nor slide outside her reach of the base she is attempting to slide</p>	<p>12.11.5 EFFECT</p>	<p><i>Regarding not advancing to a forced base with two outs and a runner attempting to score...</i> The ball is live and the runner is out. Whether or not a run</p>

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	<p>directly at a fielder.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Additional circumstances of unnecessary contact between players that result in the runner who targets the fielder rather than the base being called out and ejected.</p>		<p>scores is determined by the defense. If the runner is declared out for abandonment, it is a timing play and the run would score if another runner touched home plate before the offending runner is declared out. If the defense puts the runner out by force out (tagging her or playing the ball to the base to which the runner was forced), the run would not score.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Clarifies the options when both a timing and appeal play are applicable and a runner crosses home plate while a trailing runner fails to proceed to a base to which she is forced.</p>
		12.13.3 Note	<p><i>Reiterates that it is the first fielder playing a batted ball who is protected from an obstruction call...</i></p> <p><i>Note: The first fielder fielding a batted ball is protected from obstruction but thereafter if both the fielder and runner are acting appropriately, neither player shall be penalized for the incidental contact.</i></p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> To match information under obstruction with this under collisions.</p>
		AR 12.13.3.2 note	<p><i>Also refers to item above</i></p> <p><i>Note: The fielder is not protected like she would be if she were the first fielder fielding a batted ball.</i></p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Existing interpretation and goes along with the above change.</p>
Rule 13	Major Changes		Common Practice Updates
13.6.2 EFFECT	<p><i>Regarding the effect for equipment misuse in a way other than intended by a manufacturer...</i></p> <p>When brought to the attention of the umpire by the opposing coach, the umpire shall issue a warning to the offending head coach. Subsequent violation shall result in the abused equipment being removed from the game (not returned to the dugout) and the ejection of the head</p>	13.9 EFFECT	<p><i>Adds a reminder to umpires to make use of an on-site administrator if needed to deal with spectator sportsmanship if there's an ejection for inciting the crowd...</i></p> <p>Umpires should request the assistance of the on-site administrator in dealing with the provoked spectators</p> <p><b>Rationale-</b> If a coach has incited the crowd, it has been clear</p>

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	<p>coach (Behavioral Ejection).</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Holds the head coach accountable for the actions of his/her players after a warning is issued and removes the distraction for the umpire to identify the exact violator in the event of a subsequent violation (previously the violator is ejected).</p>		<p>that he/she is ejected but the rules did not mention how to deal with the then agitated crowd.</p>
<p>13.8.4 Also 13.1.2 AR</p>	<p><i>Changes the prohibition on arguing balls and strikes to...</i></p> <p>Question the strike zone and any call based purely on umpire's judgement.</p> <p><b>EFFECT:</b> A team warning shall be issued for the first offense in a game. Subsequent violations by the same team shall result in a behavioral ejection of the violator. All conditions for the effect of an in-game ejection apply. See Rule 13.2.</p> <p>Note; A coach or player may, on occasion, request feedback regarding the specific location of a pitch or request a rule clarification without applying Rule 13.8.4 as long as it is not made in an argumentative manner and it does not delay play.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> "Questioning the strike zone" replaces "arguing balls and strikes" to allow for discussion of a called ball to be changed to a strike due to a checked swing. The constant questioning of judgement calls that will not be changed unnecessarily delays play and is often an unsporting act designed to ruin the opponent's momentum or stall for a player to warm-up. Either violation will now result in the perpetrator's ejection.</p>		
Rule 14	Major Changes		Common Practice Updates
	No changes		No changes
Rule 15	Major Changes		Common Practice Updates
15.14.3	<p><i>Regarding the filing of incident reports...</i></p> <p>In all cases involving an ejection of an NCAA player or</p>		No changes

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	<p>team representative, the ejecting umpire is responsible for submitting an incident report...</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Eliminates the requirement for filing NCAA incident reports for violations by NAIA, USCCA, NJCAA and Cal JC offenders.</p>		
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