



**MINUTES OF THE
NATIONAL FASTPITCH COACHES ASSOCIATION
DIVISION III HEAD COACHES COMMITTEE**

Oct. 18, 2019

The meeting was brought to order at 11 a.m. ET by NFCA Division III Board Rep Renae Hartl.

Participants were Hartl (Luther) and NFCA Division III liaison Dave Hines; Atlantic Region representative John Byrne (Moravian); Central Region representatives Erica Hanrahan (DePauw) and Josie Henry (Case Western Reserve); East Region representative Lindsay McCarthy (Misericordia); Great Lakes representatives Tiffany Prager (Illinois Wesleyan); Midwest Region representatives George Wares (Central) and Jody Gabriel (Macalester); New England Region representatives Kelly Bevere (Middlebury), Kate Bowen (Springfield) and Diana Pepin (Eastern Connecticut State); Northeast Region representative Sara Curran-Headley (Oneonta); West Region representative Jessica Hollen (George Fox); NCAA Secretary-Rules Editor Vickie Van Kleeck; and NCAA national umpire coordinator Craig Hyde.

1. Roll call
2. NCAA rules
 - a. Ms. Van Kleeck said a taking the signal video is up on Arbiter.
 - b. Pitching clarification:
 - i. Stride foot or back foot can be on plate or off plate. When you set the toe of that foot, you can't increase the distance. Basically, you can't move that foot forward, backward or sideways.
 - ii. You have to be in the pitching position and that foot set in order to be able to take the signal.
 - iii. The first movement with the stride foot is forward as you start the pitching motion.
 - iv. The pivot foot can still do what it does, and it is allowed to slide across the plate.
 - v. Taking the signal:
 1. You have to be in the pitching position to take the signal, which means both feet have to be set.
 2. You can't take the signal from behind the pitcher's plate ... from the catcher or via armband.
 3. Pitchers need to be on the plate to take the signal.
 4. Catchers can give a verbal or number signal when the pitcher is off the back of the plate, but when the pitcher steps on the pitcher's plate, she needs to either look at her armband, take the

NATIONAL FASTPITCH COACHES ASSOCIATION

2641 Grinstead Drive • Louisville, KY 40206 • 502.409.4600 • 502.409.4622 fax • NFCA.org • NFCAevents.org
Education ◻ **Events** ◻ **Collaboration** ◻ **Growth** ◻ **Achievement**



- signal from the catcher, or appear to take the signal from the catcher.
5. The pitcher can't simply get on the pitch from the coach while she's off the back of the plate, step on the plate, and put her hands together.
 6. Pitcher has to appear to take the signal.
 7. Pitcher needs to be on the plate, in the pitching position, when she takes the signal or appears to take the signal.
- vi. Mr. Hyde said umpires are not "hunting illegal pitches," they just want to be fair to everyone.
 - vii. Ms. Van Kleeck said the idea is to make sure no one is caught off-guard by the pitch. The goal is to make sure batters and pitchers have time to be ready.
 - viii. Ms. Van Kleeck and Mr. Hyde will lead a Chalk Talk on rules on Saturday from 1-2:50 p.m. There are four speakers during that timeframe, so coaches can choose their favorite three sessions.
 - ix. Ms. Hanrahan asked if pitchers are able to rock back without moving the foot, and Ms. Van Kleeck said pitchers can not rock back or take a step back, but if she has her toe set and heel up, she can drop her heel, because dropping the heel is not considered increasing the distance.
 - x. Mr. Hyde agreed and said that he doesn't see an issue with the toe coming up when pitchers rock back, and noted that umpires won't be picky about that.
 - xi. Ms. Van Kleeck said they have a very diligent NCAA Rules Committee, which discusses rules extensively, but until they see those rules in actual game situations, they can't determine fully if all loopholes and scenarios have been covered.
 - xii. Mr. Hyde noted that there will be three in-person umpire clinics in January to make sure they are getting the calls right for athletes.
- c. Sign up for Arbiter.
 - i. Ms. Hartl reminded coaches that sign up is still required for Arbiter each year for them and officials. She said we will take five minutes in the D3 Caucus each year to have all coaches re-sign up.
 - d. Bat Testing
 - i. Bat testing equipment will be required for Division I this year, and will be required for Division III in 2022.
 - ii. Everyone will have to buy the \$900 machine in the next 2 ½ years.
 - iii. Details, such as when on game day the testing will take place, along with who will be doing the testing will be forthcoming.

NATIONAL FASTPITCH COACHES ASSOCIATION



3. NCAA update

- a. There has been a discussion of regional alignment for 2021. Still looking to take into account competitive balance and evening out the regions better.
- b. Softball Committee and the NFCA membership is on board with baseball's push to move the season back.
- c. Discussion about changing some regional sites to two-team, best-of-five series, starting in 2021.
 - i. West region, due to its geography and inability at times to split teams up, is what initiated this discussion.
 - ii. Thought is that there would be 14 four-team regionals, and three two-team regionals for a 62-team tournament.
 - iii. Baseball did it this year.

4. NFCA D3 Leadoff Classic

- a. Mr. Hines reported that we have a full field of 24 teams and are in good shape for March in Tucson, Ariz.

5. New business

- a. Think about what kinds of things this group should be addressing/talking about.
- b. Think about possible establishment of a Division III recruiting calendar
- c. How can this committee and the NFCA assist with/alleviate spring break tournament issues?
- d. NCAA roster size (rotational 20 or additional people in dugout without added cost to schools)
 - i. This has been discussed by coaches in ALL sports, not just softball. Ms. Hartl suggested we need to continue to have our stance, so Ms. Gentry can convey that stance for us to her colleagues at the NCAA.

6. Adjournment

- a. The meeting was adjourned at 11:38 a.m. ET.

NATIONAL FASTPITCH COACHES ASSOCIATION