



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

April 21, 2022

The meeting was brought to order at 12:00 p.m. ET by NFCA Division III Board Rep Renae Hartl.

Participants were Hartl (Luther) and NFCA Division III liaison Dave Hines; NCAA Division III Softball Committee Chair and NFCA Compliance Consultant Marie Curran-Headley; NCAA Division III Assistant Director, Championships and Alliances Micaela Liddane; NCAA National Umpire Coordinator Steve McCown; NCAA Secretary-Rules Editor Vickie Van Kleeck; Terry Burdette (Hood); Sara Curran-Headley (Oneonta); Denny Griffin (Alma); Lauren Ebstein (Tufts); Monica Harrison (Carnegie Mellon); Josie Henry (Case Western Reserve); Kris Herman (Williams); Now-Allah James (NYU); Brooke Kalman (MIT); Joe Kinsella (Lake Forest); Ryan Konitzer (Wisconsin-Stevens Point); Janet Lloyd (Chapman); Brent Matthias (Simpson); Molly O'Donnell (Cortland); Brad Posner (Susquehanna); Whitney Sowers (Millikin); Heather Stone (Western Connecticut State); Kim Wilson (Rowan); Wade Wilson (Texas Lutheran).

1. Roll call
2. NCAA update
 - a. Rules
 - i. Ms. Van Kleeck said don't do late pop-up slides at second base for the purpose of interfering with the throw on to first base. It's a form of interference.
 1. Mr. McCown added that it's a judgement call for umpires to determine what is too late or when a pop-up interferes.
 2. Ms. Hartl and Mr. Burdette noted that this type of flagrant behavior happens all the time in Division III.
 - a. Ms. Van Kleeck was going to add an interpretation on this.
 - ii. Mr. McCown said they are continuing to focus on obstruction, illegal pitches, and all the normal things that they always are looking at getting umpires to apply consistently, but it's tough to teach judgement.
 - iii. Ms. Kalman asked about umpires telling coaches that they are waiting on the result of a play to make a call.
 1. Mr. McCown said how it is supposed to work is the umpire either calls it as it happens or they don't.
 - iv. Please fill out the 2022 Rules Survey (between April 25-May 23)
 1. Provide feedback on current rules changes
 - a. Positive impact

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- b. Negative impact
- c. No impact
- 2. Considered changes:
 - a. Changing the base at first (either larger base or safety base) for safety purposes.
 - i. If we went to 18" bases, we would change all three bases to be consistent and provide more room all around (as opposed to just adding a double base at first).
 - ii. Could implement right away, since it relates to safety, unlike BCT machine, which was phased in.
 - b. One-way communication between catcher and pitcher (like used in MLB) to protect signals from being stolen and help expedite play.
 - c. Addition of padded sidewalls, like backstops need to be.
 - i. Question: What do we do for teams that play at municipal fields, when we already require padded backstops, netting for dugouts, etc.
 - d. Video review.
- v. Video replay
 - 1. Ms. Van Kleeck noted that Appendix G in the rule book addresses video replay rules.
- b. Rankings
 - i. Reminder that the first regional rankings of the season are alphabetical, and will be in order of rank in region for subsequent editions.
 - ii. Some regions will have more (or less) teams ranked.
- c. Postseason
 - i. Bids to be host site are open online until April 29 at NCAA.org's softball page (<https://bit.ly/3xuoGGR>).
 - 1. Reminder to potential site reps to reach out to Ms. Liddane or Ms. Curran-Headley to express your interest.
 - ii. Changes to squad size, travel party or bench limit would have to work through sport committees.
 - 1. Ms. Hartl said the NFCA would publicly support whatever numbers the membership wants to help that process along.
 - 2. Discussion of changes would occur in June NCAA meeting and a recommendation would be made to championships committee.
 - 3. Ms. Liddane noted that coaches are not alone in sentiment to change those numbers, and have them to match across divisions.

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- iii. COVID procedures
 - 1. No mandatory masking, unless that is the local rule
 - 2. No testing onsite or pre-arrival, unless needed
- 3. New business
 - a. Umpire shortage
 - i. Ms. Henry asked about ideas to encourage new umpires, especially females and former players, to join the profession.
 - 1. Ms. Van Kleeck said the NCAA shared that concern and would love to have former players become umpires.
- 4. Next meeting
 - a. Next Zoom meeting is noon ET on June 13. Details and call for agenda items will be emailed to HCC representatives.
- 5. Adjournment
 - a. The meeting was adjourned at 12:53 p.m. ET.

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