



VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

MEMORANDUM

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TO: NCAA Umpire Clinic Attendees – Dallas.

FROM: Jim Paronto, secretary-rules editor
NCAA Baseball Rules Committee.

SUBJECT: Clarification from Dallas NCAA Umpire Clinic – Appendix E,
Getting the Call Right.

After our recent clinic in Dallas, several comments were made to me and national coordinator Gene McArtor that indicate there is some confusion on our guidelines in Appendix E. The confusion centers around the belief that the only time a crew could get together at the request of a coach, were for items 1-7, p. 138-139. If umpires did get together for any other reason and changed a call and the change was challenged, the Secretary Rules Editor would uphold the protest of the offended team. This is far from what was intended for that video to convey and is not correct.

As umpires, our first responsibility is to adjudicate all decisions correctly the first time. The incorporation of the guidelines in Appendix E are not an attempt to umpire “by committee” as some seem to believe. Umpires in collegiate baseball must have the conviction to stand by their calls but in some instances, when an umpire feels they have made a judgment without all pieces of pertinent information, and there is clear disagreement from the dugout, stands, etc., it is time to get together with our partners.

What we attempted to convey in Dallas is that an umpire is encouraged to seek help when the view is blocked or positioning prevents the umpire from seeing crucial elements of a play (paragraph B). An example would be on the back end of a double play when the first baseman stretches directly at U1, he may not have the best angle to see that the pivot foot has been pulled. Another typical play would be a catch/no catch in the outfield with **no runners on base**. An umpire would be encouraged to seek help if he has any doubt and that his partner may have additional information that could lead to a proper ruling.

N a t i o n a l C o l l e g i a t e A t h l e t i c A s s o c i a t i o n

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The partners should also indicate to the calling official, that they may have additional information should he not feel 100 percent sure of his decision. If a coach should ask the umpire to get help, this request may be granted if the calling umpire has any doubts in his judgment on the play. It should not be granted just to pacify the coach. At that point, the umpire should stand up and "own his position." If in any situation, "the calling umpire is not 100 percent sure he is correct; and b) another umpire has additional information which could lead to a proper ruling, the umpires should get together and arrive at the proper decision."

In subsection (c) of these guidelines, a partner **shall** approach the calling umpire, unsolicited, and alert the calling umpire to his having such missing information in the seven situations on page 138. However, the final decision to change a call remains with the calling umpire.

Since 1999, when this Appendix was added to the rules book, it has been the NCAA's stance that umpires must strive to achieve correct decisions in all cases. Getting together in certain situations is an integral part of achieving that mandate. If an umpire is out of position and other umpire feedback would be no more than a guess, this might make the situation worse, and getting together is probably not an option. Please review "F)" on page 139 that further expands this philosophy.

In summary:

1. Partners should approach the calling umpire, unsolicited, if they have additional information on critical elements of a play in situations 1-7, p. 138-139.
2. Calling umpires may seek help from their partners when they are not 100 percent sure or have any doubt regarding their call. If the calling umpire recognizes that he may not have all the information that he needed, especially when there is a negative reaction from the dugouts and players around him, he might wish to ask himself, "Do I have all of the information I need to make the right call?" If he has this doubt, then he should be the one to seek help or his partners should alert him to the fact that they might have additional information.
3. Don't umpire by committee just because a coach requests that the umpires conference.
4. There are judgment calls that cannot be reversed without creating a bigger problem; have the conviction to inform the coach, "this is a play I cannot get help on and changing the call would create additional problems."
5. Adhere to the proper mechanics by requesting that the coach return to his dugout, alert him to the fact that he cannot come back out if the call is not changed and the crew chief and calling umpire inform the other coach regarding the rationale for change, if the call is reversed.

Thank you for your attendance in Dallas and your attention to this clarification. Good luck this season.