

CBUA 2020 Bulletin #1

The information contained in this Bulletin is for all CBUA umpires. As we start the 2020 college baseball season, it is important to focus on our “newer” rules . . . specifically, the 20-second action clock, video review and the pitcher’s signal card.

20-Second Action Clock . . . Primary responsibility for operating the 20-second action clock will be the base umpire in the two-umpire system and U3 in the three-umpire and four-umpire systems. Since we will all end up working our share of games where we are responsible for timing, please make sure you have a reliable watch or stopwatch available.

You may be assigned to work in a conference or at a site where a visible clock is being used. Upon arrival verify with home management if they have a wireless remote device for you to use to operate the clock or if they have someone assigned to that duty in the press box. If they are using a timer, please request that person report to the umpire’s room prior to the game to ensure they are briefed and understand the timing protocols. Please also confirm who will be operating the clock for the 120 seconds between innings.

Keep in mind this is an action clock – not a pitch clock – and philosophically we are looking to keep the pace of play going and not trying to find cheap ball and strike calls. Please carefully review this new rule and the related protocols.

Speaking of clocks . . . Please note the time between innings is 120 seconds and begins after the third out is made and the defense starts to leave the field. After the 120 seconds you should have the pitcher on the mound and the batter in/near the box because the 20-second action clock starts as soon as the 120 seconds runs out.

Please note (what we know so far):

American Athletic Conference – visible clock possible at 1-2 schools, not sure on wireless remotes.

Big 12 Conference – visible clocks, with wireless remotes.

Big East Conference – visible clocks possible at 2 schools, not sure on wireless remotes.

Big Ten Conference – visible clocks at 1-2 schools, not sure on wireless remotes.

Mid-American Conference – no visible clocks.

Video Review . . . As expected, video review is slowly becoming part of the fabric of college baseball. Upon arrival for your game(s) you need to verify if video replay will be used. If it is in play, please visit the review area and familiarize yourself with the equipment. Find out how many cameras are covering the game so you know how many potential looks you may have in a replay situation. Make sure you are familiar with the video review rules and the protocols for handling and communicating review results for the specific conference you are working.

Please note (what we know so far):

American Athletic Conference – video review at some schools.

Big 12 Conference – video review at all schools.

Big East Conference – video review at all schools.

Big Ten Conference – no video review (tourney only).

Mid-American Conference – no video review (tourney only).

Pitcher's Signal Card . . . As you know, the pitcher may now wear a signal card affixed to the inside of his wrist/forearm on his non-pitching arm. It may also be affixed to the front of his belt. This is approved to help with pace of play.

Please note:

This new rule changes a long-standing baseball rule relative to the pitcher being required to be on the rubber at the time he takes his signal. This requirement is now waived. The concern was that a pitcher, if in contact with the rubber, who then brings this forearm upward to read his signal card could create a balk with runner's on. The pitcher may now take his signal off the rubber; however, when he then steps on the rubber, he must pause as if he is taking a signal and may then proceed with his pitch (this interpretation is designed to prevent a pitcher from quick pitching in the wind up position).

Rich Fetchiet

Coordinator of Baseball Umpires

American Athletic Conference

Big 12 Conference

Big East Conference

Big Ten Conference

Mid-American Conference