

FLORIDA COLLEGIATE UMPIRES, INC.

2010 PROCEDURE MANUAL

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➤ **Information and Suggested Guidelines**

The following information and suggested guidelines are intended to assist all independent contractors officiating collegiate baseball games for universities, colleges, community colleges, and academic institutions under contract with Florida Collegiate Umpires, Inc. (FCU). You are to remember at all times that you are an independent contractor and not an employee, agent, servant, or local representative of FCU or any academic institution under contract with FCU. Pursuant to the contractual agreement between FCU and any academic institution you are to maintain a policy of medical insurance as well as liability insurance providing coverage for you while umpiring baseball contests for those academic institutions under contract with FCU.

➤ **Insurance**

All institutions under contract with FCU require that every umpire carry liability insurance of at least one million dollars. This can be obtained through membership in National Association of Sports Officials (NASO) at www.naso.org . Failure to procure this insurance will immediately terminate your contract with FCU.

➤ **Contracts**

All officials will sign a one year contract with FCU prior to umpiring any assigned games. This independent contractor agreement will not be automatically renewed annually. Each official is responsible to stay in touch with FCU and will be aware of camps, clinics and/or meetings. All officials will be able to receive and send email messages and will check www.floridacollegiateumpires.com and www.arbitersports.com frequently.

It is strongly suggested that each official carry the following items to each contest: all contact telephone numbers for umpires and coaches, a game print - out from arbitersports, a 2009 NCAA Baseball Rules Book, the current CCA Baseball Umpires Manual, the NAIA Rules Differences Printout, and the FCU Policy Manual. Every umpire will bring equipment to work the bases or the plate to every contest.

The suggested guidelines detailed in this manual are the result of many years of experience and are not to be taken lightly. Success in the field of collegiate baseball umpiring is not guaranteed by using these techniques. However, failure to follow these time honored methods will make it close to impossible to attain a level of basic competency.

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES

➤ **Pre-game crew Communication**

Communication is vital!

Every umpire needs to put their availability in the calendar on the www.arbitersports.com site. You need to keep your personal information up to date on the website. Furthermore, as the season nears you need to check the site daily for any changes. Most importantly, you MUST accept the games in

the website quickly or they will be reassigned. Since you entered your availability, turn backs should NOT happen unless an emergency occurs.

Each game has a designated crew chief. The crew chief is responsible if an umpire does not show or comes late until we find out otherwise. NEVER, NEVER fail to contact your crew within three days of the game. NEVER go to a game without knowing who will be your partner(s).

➤ **Before the game**

FCU is known for the professionalism of its umpires. Dress code requires at least office casual (slacks and golf shirts). No shorts, cut-offs, t-shirts, or sandals. Jeans or warm-up suits should not be worn to Division 1 games or Sunshine State Conference series. NO TEAM LOGOS ever!

Upon arrival at the game site, each official should check in with the institution and be directed to their dressing room. If the school desires that the baseballs be rubbed, the plate umpire is responsible. Every umpire should carry rubbing mud. If there is no dressing facility available, you may have to improvise and use your vehicle.

All umpires should arrive one hour before the schedule starting time. If a partner is late, use your contact numbers to reach them. If you are running late, call your partner and the coach!

If one umpire does not show on time, a three man crew can adjust. A two man crew cannot. Let FCU find a replacement. The coaches may agree to 1) use one umpire, 2) wait for the replacement or, 3) postpone the game. NEVER put a player or a non-FCU umpire on the field.

➤ **Inclement Weather**

If there is any chance of a game being cancelled because of weather, you must call the emergency number in arbitersports. Call this number at the time that you must leave to get to the site one hour before the game. If the game is not cancelled at that time, go to the site. Remember, the head coach of the home team is responsible for the actual starting time of the game.

➤ **Crew Chief Umpire Pre-game**

The crew chief should conduct a pre-game meeting with the crew in the locker room area. We have the pre-game instruction sheet in this manual. When something goes wrong, the first question is, “Did you cover this in pre-game?”

➤ **Home Plate Meeting with Coaches**

Address the skipper as “Coach” or by their name. Shake hands if they offer. Check home line up card first, then visitors. Fix line up problems at this time. Let the home coach do the ground rules. Ask questions if you need clarification. Don’t contradict unless the other coach doesn’t agree. Then the crew chief should make the decision. If the schools decide to use different rules, such as NAIA or agree to halted game or mercy rules, be flexible. **DO NOT** try to influence their decision. **DON’T** be a joker! Wrong place, wrong time. Be professional!

➤ **National Anthem**

Do stand at attention! Crew stands together at home plate. Respect the flag!

➤ **Game Management Personnel**

Before the game, introduce yourself and find out their name and location. They can save you when bad things happen. Also know the location of the official scorer, announcer and the ground crew.

➤ **Problems Not Related to Game Play**

Any problems that occur that are not related to actual game play should be reported to FCU. **DO NOT** attempt to solve these problems yourself. Use FCU and our management team. These problems could be but are not restricted to: parking; dressing room; security; crowd control; game fees; umpire evaluations; club house attendant; press corps; game management personnel; press box behavior; mascots; or others. Your intervention into these areas will cause problems, confusion and hard feelings with the schools and other umpires. Let FCU do the dirty work for you and free up your time to excel at umpiring.

During the Game

➤ **Plate Umpire**

Look at pitches from every new pitcher. Count the warm-ups. Count eight for a new pitcher and five from everyone else. If it is cold or the inning goes long, a pitcher may throw in foul territory during their offensive time. Be flexible in cold weather or televised games.

Record all changes and point them in to the official scorer. Record offensive and defensive changes, warnings, delays, ejections and suspensions or anything else that needs to be in the game report. Base umpires need to stay away from the pitcher's mound at all times.

➤ **Between Innings**

Plate umpires go to the base lines. Base umpires go to the outfield. They will bring you baseballs and water upon request.

➤ **Discussions with Coaches During the Game**

Each umpire will handle their own discussions. Remain **approachable** and use positive body language that shows concern for their issues. Other umpires need to stay within hearing distance. Keep all conversations one on one. Escort others from the discussion area. Ask the coach to speak in a professional and respectful tone. Do the same. Answer legitimate questions. When the discussion is over and everyone is just repeating themselves, inform the coach and return to the game and your position.. Be professional and keep your voice low. Never try to out yell or out talk the coach. Never use profanity, even when the coach uses it. Do not let the coach embarrass you or “show you up”. No jokes or sarcasm or one liners.

➤ **Warnings**

Coaches or players, by rule, may not argue these items:

1. Balls and Strikes. Warn the offender and give an official warning to the entire team through the head coach. This is for the duration of the game. Further offender will be ejected.

2. Checked swings. These are balls and strikes also. Do not allow anyone to approach you. Stop them and warn them. If they continue, eject them.
3. Balks. Give a brief discussion of the balk to the bench. Try to keep the coach in the dugout. Explain on the field but be brief. Give a warning and keep the game moving.

Other warnings include bean balls or purpose itches and bench jockeying. If you believe a pitcher is throwing at a hitter, either warn them or eject them, depending on the situation and the severity. If you warn, pitcher first, then his coach, then the other coach. Remind them that they will be ejected also if another pitch is deemed on purpose. Suspend them per NCAA rules. There will be NO bench jockeying! If you don't stop it immediately, you WILL lose control of the game. Warn once at the first time, eject the offender at the second time. If it occurs again, eject the offender and the head coach by NCAA rules.

➤ Ejections

After an ejection, keep your mouth shut and get away from the action. Your partner should step in and control the situation. They should use their body as a shield, keep their hands down and move the ejected person away from the field.

The crew chief should record the ejection on the scorecard. The ejecting umpire will call John Magnusson at (352) 538-2954 and leave a recorded message immediately following the game or double header. The ejecting umpire will send a written email report to John Magnusson at magnusjw@yahoo.com that day. The crew chief will report on the ejection in www.arbitersports.com but this will **NOT** be sufficient as an ejection report. These reports are legal documents and may be used in a court of law so be professional. At all junior college games the umpire crew will stay and fill out an ejection report for game management. Keep a copy to send to John Magnusson that day.

➤ Suspensions

There are two kinds of suspensions. One is mandated by NCAA rules and is included in the NCAA Rules Book. After the ejection, if a suspension is warranted by NCAA rule, you must inform the coach then. So you need to know the NCAA rule. Make sure you differentiate between a purposeful “bump” and contact during a heated discussion. If you never lose control and show aggression, the “bump or bill” was purposeful. However, if you are just as aggressive, their “bump” may be just as much your fault. There are also

suspensions for fighting and bean balls. Know these rules. Keep your cool always! These types of suspensions call for extra paperwork and an NCAA Suspension Form. This form needs to be sent to the NCAA and you are responsible for this.

The second type of suspension comes from the conference or governing body of the particular teams. We are not involved in these suspensions. But be aware that your input is vital to their actions. Make sure you know the definition of “flagrant or malicious contact” because this may determine the length of the suspension. Take the emotion out of the situation and appraise it objectively. You will be asked to defend your actions at all times.

All suspensions are preceded by ejections. Remember that post game ejections are NOT suspensions even though a player or coach may have to sit for the next game. An ejection form must be filled out but not a suspension report.

➤ **Fights**

Try to stop the initial charge. Never grab anyone from behind. If the fight continues, back up and get help from game management. Fights mean suspensions and ejections. Get the proper report in that day.

➤ **Rain, Lightning or Darkness**

The crew chief is responsible for stopping the game, turning on the lights, or using the tarps. You may discuss this with the crew but it is the crew chief’s total responsibility. NEVER ignore game management! Most schools apply lightning detectors. Always err on the side of safety. The thirty second “flash to bang” system is outlined in the NCAA Rules Book. Use these guidelines if the school has no lightning detection system. Florida leads the world in lightning deaths.

➤ **Protests**

Protests are to be handled in accordance with NCAA or NAIA rules. Try to settle it on the field. Go to the dressing room if necessary and reference the books that were suggested to bring (see Contracts above). Call John Magnusson, Dennis McComb or Jim Paronto if needed.

➤ **Miscellaneous**

If anything happens during the game that is unusual make sure the crew chief enters it into the game report. Make sure FCU is not blindsided! Let Dennis know if anything would affect the game fees by email.

➤ **Leaving the Field**

Umpires will leave the field swiftly and all together. Game management will provide proper security. If no one is present to get the game balls carry them to the dressing room and leave them there. Do not roll them to the dugout or give them to fans. Between the games of a double header, the crew chief will announce the starting time of the second game to game personnel.

➤ **Press Relations**

Refer questions from the press to FCU.

➤ **Game Reports**

Crew chiefs WILL submit a game report in www.arbitersports.com after every game and double header.

➤ **Tobacco and Alcohol Use**

There will be no use of alcohol or tobacco on any facility. Period.

➤ **Clubhouse Attendants**

If a facility provides a clubhouse attendant who provides extra services a monetary tip of 5% of the game fee will given to that individual.

➤ **Gifts**

FCU umpires will not accept any gifts from any institution. This includes clothing, baseballs, shoes, hats, motel rooms, golf games or anything that would cast any doubt on their integrity.

➤ **Motel Rooms**

Schools do not provide motel rooms or special prices unless it is a contracted item between the conference and FCU. This will be specified in the arbitersports site. NEVER call the school for a room. Use the internet!

SUMMARY

Remember that you are an independent contractor and these are merely suggested guidelines. But the preceding policies are based on our contracts with the schools. Use common sense and handle every situation with class. Be approachable! ALL of our problems occur when these policies are broken. We are proud of FCU and we are proud of YOU!

CREW CHIEF RESPONSIBILITIES

FCU chooses a crew chief for every game. Here are their responsibilities:

1. Communication with the crew 72 hours before every game.
2. Initial contact with the school upon arrival.
3. Travel plans, meeting places, directions, and arrival times.
4. Motel arrangements
5. Pre-game with crew in dressing room.
6. Home plate meeting with coaches.
7. Uniform on the field.
8. Game reports on www.arbitersports.com
9. Dealing with security and game management.
10. Stopping and starting game due to darkness and/or weather.
11. Any unusual circumstances that may occur.
12. Enforcing the NCAA Rules Book and NJCAA, NAIA and FCU policies

➤ **Dress Code**

FCU uniform top from Honig's

Gray pants

FCU cap

Two ball bags

No indicator on bases

➤ Dressing Room Pre-game

Discuss CCA Manual

**HAVE A GREAT 2010
BASEBALL SEASON!**