



BIG TEN CONFERENCE

TOURNAMENT MANUAL

Baseball

(SPECIFIC TO A NEUTRAL SITE EVENT)

[UPDATED 2/2020]



Baseball Tournament Manual

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Section 1. Academic Impact - Departure Requirements

Conference championship/ tournament events are subject to compliance with the conference academic impact model such that participation shall result in no more than two missed final examinations and no more than two missed class days or as specified in this section.

Based on the current dates and format, no team shall depart earlier than 12 pm (local time) on the Tuesday prior to the start of the tournament on Wednesday (only applies to teams whose academic year has not officially ended). Waivers to depart earlier shall be administered by the Joint Group members (i.e., Faculty Representative, Athletics Director and Senior Woman Administrator) on each campus. Guidelines and applicable waiver form can be found at: <http://office.bigten.org/manuals/>

Section 2. Awards and Honors

- A. A team award and the Most Outstanding Player of the Tournament award will be presented to the Conference tournament champion/automatic qualifier and respective student-athlete. *(Effective with the 1998 Tournament)* All-tournament team members will be announced and shall receive a certificate.
- B. All awards shall be ordered and purchased by the Conference office.
- C. There shall be no commercial sponsorship of individual or team awards.
- D. Individual awards are provided for the All-Conference team and for Coach, Player, Pitcher and Freshman of the Year. These awards will be shipped to the award recipient's institution.
- E. See Part III (Conference Awards and Honors System) of the Big Ten Championships Manual for information about the All-Conference team, all-academic team, media honors and other awards authorized for athletes in the sport of baseball.

Section 3. Awards Presentation *(Editorial Revision 3/14)*

There shall be an awards ceremony to present the tournament award for the winner of the Big Ten baseball tournament as well as to recognize the Most Outstanding Player of the Tournament. The tournament winner is awarded the NCAA automatic qualification berth and the Conference champion is determined by the best winning percentage of games played during the regular season Conference schedule.

Section 4. Ball

- A. The Rawlings R-1 NCAA ball will be used for the 2017-21 Conference Tournaments provided Rawlings meets the specifications requested by the Conference in its agreement. *(Revised 1/00, 2/06; Effective 2/06; Editorial Revision 4/10; 2/14, 7/17)*
- B. The host shall have 80 dozen balls, all provided by Rawlings, on hand to start the tournament. *(Revised 2/04, 2/06; Effective 2/06)*
- C. The umpires shall rub and examine four dozen balls prior to the start of each game.



Section 5. Bat

For regular season games and the Big Ten Tournament, only bats that meet the specifications allowed for use in the NCAA Division I baseball championship will be used. *(Revised 1/99, 2/04; Effective 2/04)*

Section 6. Bat Testing

The Big Ten Bat Testing Protocol and Reporting Form are outlined in Attachment C and D.

Section 7. Coaches' Meeting

There shall be a participating coaches' meeting with the baseball Coordinator of Officials the day preceding the tournament, immediately prior to the press conference. The purpose of this meeting shall be to review final arrangements regarding the tournament. The names of the umpires will be distributed but the specific game assignments will not be available until approximately one hour before each game. The conference shall notify the umpires and coaches of the time and location of the meeting. *(Revised and effective 2/08)* If possible, the host shall arrange for a coaches' lunch following the meeting and preceding the press conference.

Section 8. Dates of Tournament

The Conference tournament shall take place on the weekend prior to the NCAA Championship Regional and shall begin on a Wednesday. *(Revised and effective 10/4-5/99)*

Section 9. Drug Testing

As part of its comprehensive drug testing program, the Big Ten Conference will conduct drug testing at a number of Conference championships and tournaments each year. Drug testing may occur at any Big Ten championship or tournament and any student-athlete on the travel squad (including a nonparticipating or injured student-athlete) is subject to drug testing. Specific information regarding drug testing protocols can be found in Appendix F of the Big Ten Conference Handbook. *(Effective 8/1/07)*

Section 10. Dugouts

The home team shall occupy the third-base dugout. Teams waiting to play are expected to stay clear of the dugouts until the teams in the preceding game have had an opportunity to remove their equipment and teams vacating the dugouts shall be encouraged to depart as soon as possible. If a team plays back-to-back games on the same day, there is no need to switch dugouts. *(Revised and effective 2/04)*



Section 11. Equipment and Facilities

- A. The host shall furnish all facilities, equipment, and other game essentials which shall meet NCAA specifications.
- B. It is recommended that the host shall have the following facilities available:
 - 1. A warm-up bullpen for both teams, and
 - 2. A secondary hitting area or field for batting practice.

Section 12. Field (*Revised and Effective 2/04*)

In order to avoid cancellations due to wet grounds, the host shall provide a reliable rain cover for the entire infield. This cover shall be placed on the field the day before the tournament, unless the condition of the field does not warrant this action.

Section 13. Format for Tournament

- A. The Conference tournament shall be conducted according to an eight-team format using the schedule of games shown in Attachment A (*Revised 10/4-5/99, 3/02; 10/7/13, 2/19; Effective 2/19*).
- B. All tournament games shall consist of nine innings, and shall be completed to nine innings if delayed for any reason.
- C. A game may be stopped after seven innings if one team is ahead by at least ten (10) runs.
- D. If a game is called before nine innings are played and the decision to postpone is made before 10:00 p.m., the game shall be completed the next day prior to the regularly scheduled games. If a game is called before nine innings are played and the decision to postpone the game is made after 10:00 p.m. (local time), the game shall be continued as the second game on the following day (after the first regularly scheduled game of the day has been completed). If the game has not started by 10:00 p.m. (local time) and the decision is made to postpone, the game shall be completed the next day prior to the regularly scheduled games. (*Revised and effective 01/18*)

Section 14. Home Team

The highest-seeded teams from the final Conference standings shall be the home teams for the first-round contests. In subsequent games, the home team shall be determined according to the following formula:

- 1. The team that has been the home team the fewer number of times shall be designated the home team.
- 2. If the two teams are equal in this respect but unequal in the number of times they were the visitor, then the team that has been the visitor more often will be designated the home team.
- 3. If the two teams are equal in the number of times that they have been home and visitor, tournament manager shall observe the following procedures in the order stated:
 - a. The team that was visitor in its preceding game shall be the home team, unless both teams were visitors in their preceding games.

- b. If the two teams have met previously in that particular tournament, the visitor in the previous game shall be the home team in the game in question.
- c. If the above procedures do not resolve the matter, the highest seeded team shall be the home team.

Section 15. Inclement Weather (*Revised and Effective 2/04*)

- A. The Big Ten Conference representative, in consultation with the protest committee, shall have the authority to cancel a game and start a game. Umpires may only halt play once the game has started.
- B. Continuation of the game shall be under the absolute jurisdiction of the umpires and the Big Ten Conference representative, in consultation with the protest committee.
- C. If possible, a game shall begin no later than one hour after the scheduled starting time.

Section 16. Jewelry

Student-athletes are prohibited from wearing on their bodies any type of jewelry in all Big Ten regular season or championship competition. (*Revised 5/99, Effective 8/99*)

Section 17. Lightning Policy (*Revised and effective 2/01*)

- A. The host's lightning policy shall be followed provided it is at least as stringent as NCAA guidelines.
- B. When the host does not have a lightning policy, NCAA guidelines shall be followed. See Appendix F of the Big Ten Championships Manual.
- C. If a lightning policy will be used that differs from NCAA guidelines, this policy will be communicated by the host to the participating teams and officials prior to the start of the tournament.

Section 18. Media Services (*Revised 2/06, Editorial Revision 10/10; Effective 10/10*)

The host, in conjunction with the conference office, shall have the following responsibilities with regard to media services:

- A. Arrange for the media needs of all teams.

Note: All contracts for radio and television rights for Conference tournament shall be approved and administered by the Commissioner's office. All radio rights receipts shall accrue to the tournament account.

- B. Administer the credentials of all media personnel.
- C. Provide the official scorer for the games.
- D. Sale of the program at the tournament shall be the responsibility of the host. Revenues incurred during the conduct of the tournament shall be included in the tournament receipts portion of the financial report due to the Conference office.
- E. Distribute the results of the games to all appropriate media outlets.



Section 19. NCAA Clock Protocols *(Effective 2/11)*

NCAA clock protocols monitoring the time allowed between pitches and innings shall be managed by umpires on the field.

Section 20. Number of Players

A 27-player roster shall be submitted to the official scorer and head umpire using a standard form approved by the conference office at the coaches' meeting the day prior to the tournament (see Attachment B). All players on these rosters are to have been certified eligible and must have their names on file as such in the Conference office. Only these players shall be eligible to play in the Conference tournament. *(Revised 2/04, 2/12; Effective 2/12)*

Section 21. Practice Policies *(Revised 12/95, 2/09, 2/14; Effective 2/14; Editorial Revision 10/10)*

- A. All teams shall have an opportunity to practice on the official playing field one time prior to the opening day.
- B. The times for practice shall be assigned by the host.
- C. This information shall be sent in advance.
- D. All batting practices will take place in the respective indoor batting cages at, except on the practice day in which batting practice shall occur on the field (Note: Location of batting practices (i.e. batting cages or on-the-field) is subject to change prior to any tournament game as assigned by the tournament manager). All teams will be assigned times in the batting cages on the Tuesday prior to the Tournament. The batting cages will be open 2 hours prior to the start of each game and will be exclusively available to those teams playing in each game.
- E. The following timing sheet will be used for the second, third or fourth games played each day:

+60 minutes	-	Field Prep
+35 minutes	-	Home Team Practice
+25 minutes	-	Visiting Team Practice
+15 minutes	-	Field Prep
+10 minutes	-	Umpires/Coaches Meeting at home plate
+5 minutes	-	Introductions/National Anthem
+0 minutes	-	First Pitch

Section 22. Pre-Tournament Press Conference

The host, in conjunction with the conference office, shall arrange for a press conference to be held the day preceding the tournament. Each participating coach shall be provided an opportunity to speak to the media.

Section 23. Protests

- A. There shall be a Protest Committee, consisting of the Conference office representative, the chief umpire and the tournament manager, who shall chair the Committee.
- B. The Protest Committee shall handle all protests.
- C. All protests are decided by the Protest Committee and must be decided before play can continue.
- D. The procedure for protest shall be as follows:
 - 1. The coach making the protest must protest to the umpire-in-chief.
 - 2. The umpire-in-chief immediately takes it to the Protest Committee.
 - 3. The Protest Committee, after discussion, either upholds or denies the protest at that time. Their ruling is final.
 - 4. Protests must be made when the action happens. No protest can be made after a succeeding play or pitch is made.
 - 5. A game ending protest can be made before the umpires leave the field. The umpires should be instructed to wait several minutes on the playing field after the game has ended. They should not run directly off the field after the last out. They should allow some time for a possible protest.

Section 24. Rules

- A. NCAA rules shall be followed, except as modified by the Conference Handbook and this manual, and where required by local ground rules.
- B. The local ground rules shall be given to all participating coaches and the umpires before the tournament begins.

Section 25. Selection and Seeding of Participants *(Revised 10/99, 4/00, 10/10, 2/13, 10/13; Effective 10/13)*

- A. The tournament shall consist of eight (8) teams.
- B. If a team is on suspension, it shall not be eligible to participate in the conference tournament. If a suspended team is among the top eight finishers in the final regular season standings, all teams shall move up one place in the final standings for the purpose of determining the automatic qualifying teams.
- C. The top eight teams in the final regular season standings based on winning percentage of scheduled conference games shall automatically qualify for the tournament. Tie games shall be counted in the standings as one-half win and one-half loss. These top eight teams will also earn seeds #1-#8 based on the final regular season standings and using the below tiebreaking procedures, if necessary.
 - 1. If two teams are tied in the final regular season standings, the following tiebreaker shall be used to determine the automatic qualifier and/or higher seed in the conference tournament:
 - a. If the tied teams have not played each other as part of the conference schedule, move to the next step in the tiebreaker process. If the two teams played each other as part of



the conference schedule, the winner of the game or series of the games between the two tied teams shall automatically qualify for the tournament and/or earn the higher seed.

- b. If the teams are still tied, the team with the best winning percentage against Big Ten common opponents within the conference schedule shall automatically qualify for the tournament and/or earn the higher seed.
 - c. If the teams are still tied, the team with the best overall RPI, per warrenolan.com, shall automatically qualify for the tournament and/or earn the higher seed.
 - d. If the teams are still tied, automatic qualification to the tournament and/or higher seed shall be determined by a flip of the coin to be conducted by the Commissioner (or designee).
2. If three or more teams are tied in the final regular season standings, the following tiebreaker procedure shall be implemented to determine the automatic qualifier(s) and/or higher seed in the conference tournament:
- a. If all of the tied teams have not played each other as part of the conference schedule, move to the next step in the tiebreaker process. If three or more teams are tied and they have all played each other as part of the conference schedule, the team(s) with the best winning percentage(s) in these head-to-head games shall automatically qualify for the tournament and/or earn the higher seed. If one team is separated as a qualifier and/or higher seed and any of the other teams remain tied based on head-to-head winning percentage, see Section 25. C.3. If two teams are separated from the group at the top then those two teams will begin the tiebreaker process for two teams (Section 25.C.1) from the beginning and if any of the other teams remain tied based on head-to-head winning percentage, see Section 25. C.3. If three or more teams are separated from the group at the top, then those tied teams will begin the tiebreaker process for three or more teams (Section 25.C.2) from the beginning and if any of the other teams remain tied based on head-to-head winning percentage, see Section 25. C.3.
 - b. If three or more teams are still tied, the team(s) with the best winning percentage(s) against Big Ten common opponents within the conference schedule shall automatically qualify for the tournament and/or earn the higher seed. If one team is separated as a qualifier and/or higher seed and any of the other teams remain tied based on best winning percentage against Big Ten common opponents within the conference schedule, see Section 25. C.3. If two teams are separated from the group at the top then those two teams will begin the tiebreaker process for two teams (Section 25.C.1) from the beginning and if any of the other teams remain tied based on best winning percentage against Big Ten common opponents within the conference schedule, see Section 25. C.3. If three or more teams are separated from the group at the top, then those tied teams will begin the tiebreaker process for three or more teams (Section 25.C.2) from the beginning and if any of the other teams remain tied based on best



winning percentage against Big Ten common opponents within the conference schedule, see Section 25. C.3.

- c. If three or more teams are still tied, the team(s) with the best overall RPI shall automatically qualify for the tournament and/or earn the higher seed. If one team is separated as a qualifier and/or higher seed and any of the other teams remain tied, see Section 25. C.3. If two teams are separated from the group at the top (have the same RPI) then those two teams will begin the tiebreaker process for two teams (Section 25.C.1) from the beginning and if any of the other teams remain tied, see Section 25. C.3. If three or more teams are separated from the group at the top (have the same RPI), then those tied teams will begin the tiebreaker process for three or more teams (Section 25.C.2) from the beginning and if any of the other teams remain tied, see Section 25. C.3.
 - d. If three or more teams are still tied, automatic qualification to the tournament and/or higher seed shall be determined by a random draw to be conducted by the Commissioner (or designee).
3. When determining the automatic qualifiers to the tournament and/or seeding based on final regular season standings and one or more teams have been separated at the top using one of the procedures in Section 25.C.2, then the following shall apply to the remaining teams:
- a. If three or more remaining teams (which could include one or more multiple-team ties) are still tied based on the specific tiebreaker used to separate the top team or teams from the group, all remaining teams will begin the tiebreaker process for three or more teams (Section 25.C.2) from the beginning.
 - b. If only two remaining teams are still tied based on the specific tiebreaker used to separate the top team or teams from the group, the two tied teams will begin the tie breaker process for two teams (Section 25.C.1) from the beginning.

Section 26. Staff

The following personnel shall be provided for conduct of the Conference baseball tournament:

- A. Tournament manager
Note: The host shall appoint a tournament manager who shall not be a Conference baseball coach or a host Director of Athletics.
- B. Eight umpires (revised and effective 11/22/99, 1/13)
- C. An adequate tarp and ground crew
- D. Ball shaggers and bat boys (the ground crew may serve this function)
- E. Ticket takers, program sellers
- F. Sports information personnel.



Section 27. Starting Times (*Revised 4/00, 2/04, 2/06, 2/09, 1/19; Effective 1/19; Editorial Revision 10/10*)

- A. Starting times of all practices shall be determined by the host.
- B. Game times as outlined in Attachment A shall be followed.
- C. The final game of the day must begin before 11:00 p.m. local time, or be postponed until the following day.
- D. An individual team shall play no more than two games in one day, not counting suspended games, with the exception of the final day of the event.

Section 28. Team Uniforms

The visiting team shall wear a uniform of different color than the home team. The home team has the prerogative of choosing the color it wishes to wear. Example, should the home teams want to wear white, the visitor has to wear a contrasting color.

Section 29. Tournament Manager's Responsibilities (*Revised 2/04, 2/06; Effective 2/06; Editorial Revisions 10/10, 1/11*)

The tournament manager shall be responsible for working with personnel at the host site to insure that the following duties are performed:

- A. Adhere to all financial obligations related to the tournament, as stated within the contract between the host and the conference.
- B. Set the price of, print and sell tickets and assure maximum promotion of the tournament.
- C. In conjunction with the conference office, set the time of the games and notify the teams of when and where the games will be played.
- D. Notify the teams where they will dress for practice and games. It is possible they may wish to dress at their lodging quarters.
- E. Notify the teams where they will practice and the times. Practice times for the day prior to opening day shall be sent in advance to the participating coaches.
- F. The conference office shall contact the officials selected by the conference assignor. Host management shall inform the umpires of the following championship information:
 - 1. Dates of games
 - 2. Starting times of games
 - 3. Remuneration
 - 4. Lodging information
 - 5. Dressing quarters.
- G. Notify the visiting coaches of available room block options, as well as preferred eating establishments. If possible, identify an official headquarters hotel for all teams and umpires, in order to get a better overnight rate.
- H. Arrange a complimentary meeting space at or close to the tournament facility. This room would be used for the pre-championship meeting of the Protest Committee, coaches, and umpires to discuss ground rules, tournament procedure, play and rules interpretation. It could then be used as a press room.

- I. Arrange for a practice field to be used by the teams prior to the hour of their games.
- J. Time the infield and batting practice, ask the team to leave the field when their time has elapsed and ensure that the games start on time.
- K. Supervise the ground crew which works for and with the tournament manager (not the host coach). The tournament manager shall instruct the ground crew as to when and how the field is to be conditioned.

Section 30. Tie Breaker For NCAA Automatic Qualifier and Tournament Champion

The NCAA automatic qualifier and Tournament Champion shall be the winner of the eight-team Conference postseason tournament. (*Revised 12/9/91, 12/14/92, 10/4/99, 5/02, 2/04, 2/05, 10/13, 3/14; Effective 3/14*)

If the baseball tournament cannot be started or is not played to completion, the highest remaining seed in the tournament shall be used to determine the NCAA Automatic Qualifier. (*Revised and Effective 3/14*)

Section 31. Umpires (*Revised 2/06, 8/07, 2/08, 10/13; Effective 10/13; Editorial Revisions 10/10, 1/11*)

- A. The Conference authorizes the payment of game fees, travel, lodging and per diem for eight umpires based on an eight-team tournament and travel, lodging, and per diem for the supervisor of umpires. The supervisor of umpires should make best efforts to be present at all Big Ten Tournament games.
- B. The coordinator shall use the coaches' evaluations as a tool in the tournament umpire selection process.
- C. The tournament manager shall notify the coaches of the umpires' names. Specific game assignments will not be available until approximately one hour before each game.
- D. Two umpires shall be designated as the crew chiefs.
- E. The Conference shall be responsible for payment of umpires (see Section VII of Championships Manual).
- F. The rotation for umpires working each game shall be that the head umpire is designated as the home plate umpire for the first game and then the normal rotation around the bases shall be followed for subsequent games. The supervisor of umpires, in consultation with the conference office representative, may adjust the rotation during the tournament. A four-person officiating crew rotation is used.
- G. The umpires are to be on the playing field 15 minutes before game time and have the baseballs for the game. The games should start with approximately four dozen baseballs, pre-rubbed and examined by the umpires.
- H. The umpires are to go to home plate 10 minutes before game time and receive the line-ups from the coaches. At this time, last minute instructions or ground rule changes should be discussed.
- I. Officiating Conflict of Interest Policy - A person shall not be appointed or retained as an official if the person's other employment or conditions might affect the efficiency or quality of the person's officiating. The following individuals are prohibited from serving



as officials for conference events during the regular season and championship/tournament
(Revised 8/07, 2/16; Effective 2/16):

- A. Immediate family members;
- B. Current coach or individual affiliated with a current program;
- C. Individual involved in a personal relationship with a coach/student-athlete;
- D. Student at a Conference university.

Any person employed by a Conference university shall only be appointed as an official if it is deemed by the Conference office that no conflict of interest exists.