

BASEBALL POLICIES – UPDATED 02/28/17

A. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

1. **Competition Rules:** Conference competition (regular season and Conference championships) shall be governed by NCAA Baseball Rules as specified in the NCAA Baseball Rules Book.
2. **Competition Site:** All Conference games are to be played on the field of the scheduled home team, except by mutual agreement between the Athletic Directors of the competing teams. If extenuating circumstances necessitate a substitute home field, an athletics administrator of the home team is required to notify the affected team in advance of the scheduled game. *(Revised August 2010)*
3. **Complimentary Tickets:** If an institution charges admission to regular season home contests, it must provide 20 complimentary tickets to each visiting conference opponent. *(Revised February 2000)*
4. **Conference Schedule:** The Conference schedule will feature 24 Conference games consisting of eight three-game series amongst the seven Conference teams. Each institution will play four home and four away series. Each series will be a three-game series within a two-day (consecutive) timeframe scheduled for Saturday and Sunday. Each institution will play two conference opponents in a double round robin format (home and home), while facing the remaining four Conference opponents in a single round robin format. Each Conference institution will receive two bye weekends, one during the first three weekends of the schedule. Additionally, those teams competing twice during the season will play the first series within the first three weekends of the Conference schedule. *(Revised July 2013)*
 - a. Conference opponents will play a nine- and a seven-inning game on Saturday and one nine-inning game in Sunday.
 - i. The nine-inning game will be played first and the seven-inning game second. *(Revised October 2013)*
 - b. In the event of inclement weather, facility concerns, or other unforeseen circumstances, the order of games may be changed by mutual agreement of the schools in consultation with the home team game administrator and the Conference office. *(Revised July 2008)*
 - c. There is no mandatory Monday make-up day. *(Revised October 2015)*
 - d. The Conference office shall be responsible for preparing the annual Conference schedule. No Conference games may be scheduled after the Sunday preceding the annual championship.

- e. If both teams elect to move the weekend series, non-weather related, from the scheduled days of Saturday-Sunday to Friday-Saturday during the regular season, the Conference office must be notified of the change by February 1st before the change will be considered official. *(Revised March 2015)*
 - i. If a series was moved to Friday and Saturday, the series shall continue through Sunday, if necessary and weather permitting.
(Revised October 2015)
 - j. The final regular season series must be scheduled for Friday and Saturday.
5. **Game Ball:** The baseball used for Conference play shall be the Rawlings R1 NCAA AEC.
(Revised September 2008)
6. **Game Times:** All Conference game times shall be at the discretion of the host institution.
- a. Exception: Start time for Sunday doubleheaders is 12pm (NOON).
(Revised September 2011)
7. **Home Game Administrator:** A game management representative from the host institution must be designated for each contest. The representative shall be identified to all game officials and the visiting team's coaching staff prior to the contest and shall be located in the press box or in another central and visible location for the duration of the contest. In addition, this individual shall be versed in the operation of all equipment and/or shall be equipped with a means of communication to contact necessary personnel in the event that problems arise. *(Revised March 2010)*
8. **Inclement Weather Policies:**
- a. Advance Notice for Inclement Weather: An athletics administrator of the host institution shall communicate any forecast of inclement weather to the designated athletics administrator for the visiting team prior to the visiting team's departure from their campus. All conversations between administrators will be done in consult with the America East office.
 - i. If agreed upon by both schools, a series may be moved up to a Friday/Saturday schedule. *(Revised October 2015)*
 - ii. If a series was moved to Friday and Saturday, the series shall continue through Sunday, if necessary and weather permitting.
(Revised October 2015)
 - b. Change of Playing Site Due to Inclement Weather: Should a field become unavailable for an entire weekend due to an advance forecast for inclement weather OR if weather has already made the field unplayable, the series shall reverse sites and the games shall be conducted at the home site of the original visiting team (field availability and weather permitting).

- i. If the change of playing site takes place in the first series of the season between Conference opponents scheduled to play a home and home series that particular season, the site for the second scheduled series of the season will then change, so that each Conference team has a home series.
 - ii. If the change of playing site takes place between Conference opponents scheduled to play one series that particular season or in the second series of the season between Conference opponents scheduled to play a home and home series, the team that was originally scheduled to travel shall reimburse the new visiting team the amount that they would have expended for travel minus the cost of umpires. The original home team shall retain the home team designation for the entire series. All conversations between administrators will be done in consult with the America East office.
- c. Responsibility for Game Start/Suspension/Resumption/Termination: The designated athletics administrator for the host institution shall be responsible for determining if the field is playable until the game commences. From that point forward the home plate umpire shall assume full responsibility for the determination of the suspension, resumption or termination of play. The home plate umpire for the first game shall be the sole judge as to whether playing conditions permit the start of the second game of a doubleheader.
- d. Postponed Games: When a regularly scheduled conference game(s) is postponed due to inclement weather conditions, every effort shall be made to complete the game within the scheduled dates of the series.
(Revised October 2015)
 - i. Inability to Finish Series: Any game(s) of a conference series which is not played by **Sunday** shall not be rescheduled. (Revised October 2015)
- f. Definition of a Regulation Game:
 - i. A regulation game in America East Conference regular season play shall be considered seven- or nine-innings unless:
 - (A) Extended by a tied score;
 - (B) Shortened because the home team needs none or only part of its half of the seventh or ninth inning; or
 - (C) Shortened because the umpire calls the game for any cause that puts patrons or players in peril such as darkness, inclement weather, a facility problem, crowd behavior, etc. provided the conditions in (8.f.ii.) have been met.
 - ii. It shall be a regulation game if called by the umpire at any time after five innings have been completed and the score shall be that of the last

equal inning played, except that in the following circumstances the score of the game shall be the total number of runs that each team has scored:

- (A) If the team second at bat has scored more runs at the end of its fourth inning than the team first at bat has scored after five innings;
- (B) If the team second at bat has scored in an unequal number of innings more runs than the team first at bat, or
- (C) If the team second at bat is at bat when the game is called and had scored in the uncompleted inning more runs than the team first bat.

Each team must play an equal number of innings unless shortened because the home team needs none or only part of its half inning.

g. Stoppage of Regulation Game:

- i. If an America East Conference regular season game is stopped at any time after its start because of inclement weather, darkness, light failure or umpires' decision, and the score **is not** tied and the game **is** considered a regulation game, as defined above, it will not be resumed at a later time and the score will stand.
- ii. If an America East Conference regular season game is stopped and the score **is** tied and the game **is** considered a regulation game, it will be considered **halted**. It will be resumed from the exact point of stoppage and finished to completion at the earliest possible opportunity. The only exception to this is if the game is the final game of the series, then the game will be considered a tie and counted as such in the America East standings.

h. Stoppage of Non-Regulation Game: If an America East Conference regular season game is stopped at any time after its start and **is not** considered a regulation game, it will be considered **halted**. It will be resumed from the exact point of stoppage and finished to completion at the earliest possible opportunity. The only exception to this is if it is the last game of the series. In this case, the game is considered a "no-game".

i. Number of Games that May Be Played in One Day:

- i. The decision to begin any portion of a third game on the same day shall be at the discretion of the two head coaches, the game administrator and the home plate umpire. This "third" game will only be necessitated if the two teams had to finish a portion of a game that was halted. If the two teams cannot reach a consensus as to whether to play, the decision shall rest with the home team administrator and the Conference office.

- ii. At fields without lights (Albany, Hartford and Stony Brook), no game shall be started any later than two hours before the posted sundown times for that location. For example, if sundown is at 7:07 p.m. in Albany, the game must start by 5:07 p.m. or it shall be played the following day.
 - iii. If the facility has lights, no game shall start after 9:30 p.m. and no inning shall start later than 12:30 a.m.
- 9. **Official Scorer:** The official scorer shall be designated by the sports information director of the home team and shall be seated in the press box. The home team is responsible for providing the visiting team with a copy of the official box score.
- 10. **Protests:** After filing a protest in accordance with current NCAA Baseball Rules, the protesting coach shall advise an athletics administrator at this institution of the protest. Details, circumstances, situations, etc., of the protest must be in writing and must be submitted within 24 hours to the Commissioner by an athletics administrator representing the protesting institution. The Commissioner shall decide the course of action to be followed in resolving the protest with the use of the NCAA Baseball Rules book, the rules of organized baseball, precedents from baseball and other sports decisions, and Conference policies. The Commissioner, within 72 hours of the written filing of the protest, shall make a decision. No protest shall be permitted on judgment decisions made by umpires.
- 11. **Sporting Conduct:** Please refer to the America East Administrative Policy Manual.
- 12. **Scouting Policy:** There shall be no verbal or visual communication, including videos, photographs or films, exchanges of scouting reports on any Conference team given to non-conference opponents.
- 13. **Tobacco Policy:** As per NCAA policy, the use of tobacco products by a student-athlete or coach is prohibited during practice and competition. A student-athlete or coach who uses tobacco products during a practice or competition shall be disqualified for the remainder of that practice or competition. The use of tobacco products by game officials also is prohibited.
- 14. **Umpires:** Each member institution shall use umpires assigned by the America East Conference Coordinator of Baseball Officials for all home games. All regular season Conference games shall have three umpires. Umpires may not be publicly criticized by Conference member institution's personnel, including comments to media outlets. Host institutions shall be responsible for the prompt payment of umpires.
(Revised January 2015)

B. CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIP

1. **Dates:** The America East Conference Baseball Championship shall take place on the weekend preceding the NCAA Division I Baseball Championship.
2. **Eligibility:** The **six** Conference teams with the highest Conference winning percentage will qualify for the America East Conference Baseball Championship. (*UMass Lowell not eligible until 2018*). In the case of a tie, please refer to the tie-break criteria. (*Revised November 2015*)

- a. **Tie-Break Criteria:** Ties shall be broken from the top of the standings down. In the event of a tie between two or more teams the tie shall be broken using the following criteria in order:
 - i. Winning percentage in Conference games versus the other teams with which it is tied (i.e. head-to-head competition)
 - ii. Winning percentage in Conference games versus the other conference opponents in descending rank order. In the event of arriving at another group of tied teams when comparing records, each team's record (winning percentage) versus the combined tied teams is used rather than the performance versus the individual tied teams.
 - iii. Winning percentage versus common non-Conference Division 1 opponents.
 - iv. Draw conducted by the Commissioner or his designee.

Once a tie is broken among three or more teams, immediately return to (2a.i) to break the tie between the remaining teams.

3. **Event Management:** The host institution shall be responsible for staging the championship, including securing a public-address announcer, scoreboard operator, official scorer, grounds crew, security, ushers, ticket sellers, ticket takers, reasonable accommodations to support with radio broadcasts and medical and emergency services. In addition, the press area must be covered and have ample power. (*Revised March 2012*)

4. **Format:**

- a. The annual championship shall consist of a **six-team**, double elimination format. (*Revised November 2015*)

Wednesday

Game 1 - No. 4 vs. No. 5
Game 2 - No. 3 vs No. 6
Game 3 – Loser G1 vs. Loser of G2

Thursday

Game 4 - No. 1 vs Winner G1
Game 5 - No. 2 vs. Winner G2
Game 6 – Winner of G3 vs. Loser G4/G5 (*lower seed*)

Friday

Game 7 – Winner of G4 vs. Winner of G5
Game 8 – Winner of G6 vs. Loser of G4/G5 (*higher seed*)
Game 9 – Winner of G8 vs. Loser G7

Saturday

Game 10 – Winner G7 vs Winner G9
Game 11 – *If Necessary*

- b. All games shall be nine-innings.
 - c. The Conference champion shall be the winner of the annual championship and shall represent the Conference in the NCAA Division I Baseball Championship.
- 5. **Host/Site:** The site of the America East Baseball Championship is LeLacheur Park in Lowell, MA. The America East Conference office will act as host of the neutral site championship. *(Revised May 2013)*
 - a. If the facility has lights, no game shall start after 9:30 p.m. and no inning shall start later than 12:30 a.m. *(Revised July 2009)*
- 6. **Game Ball:** The official tournament baseball for America East Championship shall be the Rawlings R1 NCAA AEC baseball. The host institution shall be provided with thirty dozen baseballs.
- 7. **Game Times:** The Conference office, in conjunction with the host institution, shall determine start times for all games. *(Revised July 2009)*
- 8. **Home Team:** The higher-seeded team shall serve as the home team for each game of the championship. *(Revised October 2016)*
- 9. **Medical Staffing:** The host institution shall arrange for a physician or certified athletic trainer to be in attendance at all practices and contests conducted in conjunction with the championship.
- 10. **Number of Games Played in One Day:** One team cannot play three complete games in any one day of the Conference championship. *(Revised August 2006)*
- 11. **Pre-Championship Call:** A pre-championship conference call of head coaches, tournament administration, and the crew chief or Coordinator of Officials shall be held prior to the start of the championship to discuss pertinent details.
- 12. **Protest Procedure:** The following protest procedure shall be used in all championship games:
 - a. Any protest by the head coach of a competing team must be made at the time of the action or incident that caused the protest and before play is resumed.
 - b. If the game ends (legal contest) in a protestable situation, the offended team has until all fielders have left fair territory to voice its protest intentions.
 - c. All protests must be made to the umpire-in-chief; however, if he is not working the game, the home plate umpire shall receive the protest and he shall consult with the games committee. The decision as to the course of action to be followed in resolving the protest shall be determined with the use of the NCAA

Baseball Rules book, the rules of organized baseball, precedents from baseball and other sports decisions, and Conference policies.

- d. No protest shall be allowed that involves a judgment decision by an umpire.

13. Rescheduling Policy: In the event of adverse weather, a representative from stadium operations, along with the Games Committee, shall decide if the field is playable prior to a game. Once play commences, the decision to play is that of the Umpire-in-Chief.

- a. Postponed games shall be rescheduled for the next available time slot or shall be rescheduled for the next day. If play has been stopped before a nine-inning game has been completed, it shall be resumed at the point of interruption, with the exception that after a minimum of seven-innings of play, if one team is ahead by 12 or more runs or if the home team is ahead by 12 or more runs after six and one-half innings, and the game cannot be finished, it shall be ruled a regulation game.

14. Abbreviated or Canceled Tournament: Should adverse weather force the Conference Championship to not be completed by the Sunday deadline, the highest remaining seed in the winner's bracket at the **conclusion** of the most recently completed **round** (e.g., semifinal) shall be declared the tournament champion and shall be designated as the Conference's automatic qualifier for the NCAA Division I Baseball Championship.

15. Squad Size: Players in uniform shall be restricted to the NCAA limit of eligible players and shall be designated on the official roster form that shall be due preceding the championship. Only those players listed on the official roster shall be eligible to play in the championship. Once championship play has begun, no changes may be made on the official team roster for any reason.

16. Team Benches: In its dugout, each team is restricted to the NCAA limit of eligible players in uniform. Once a game begins, the athletic trainer or manager is permitted on the field only to perform his/her appropriate duty.

17. Ticket Pricing: Ticket prices for all games shall be set by the Conference office in consultation with the host institution. Youth and student tickets are to be sold only to youth 14 & under and students at America East member institutions with a valid America East member ID, respectively. Complimentary admissions shall be governed by the policies set forth in the America East Administrative Policy Manual. (*Revised August 2006*)

18. Tobacco Policy: At both America East Conference and NCAA Championships, tobacco use by any individuals on the field of play - as well as during other championship activities such as banquets, autograph sessions, press conference and post game interviews is prohibited. Violations of this policy shall be dealt with by the appropriate sports committee in accordance with Rule 3-11 of the NCAA Baseball Rules and the misconduct provisions of NCAA Bylaw 31.1.8. Further, in the sport of baseball, dugouts are considered to be on the field of play.

19. **Umpires:** Four umpires shall be assigned for all games. Payment of championship officials shall be directed by the Conference office upon conclusion of the championship.
20. **Uniforms:** Participants in the championship shall wear exclusively the official uniform of their institution in competition and during related ceremonies (*refer to Rule 1-14 of the NCAA Baseball Rules Book*).

C. AWARDS

1. **Weekly Regular Season Awards:** The Conference office shall name a Player, Pitcher and Rookie of the Week each week during the season of competition. It is the responsibility of each institution to nominate players for these awards. Players will be recognized on the America East website.
2. **Selection of Postseason Awards:** The head coaches shall select recipients of all baseball awards. Coaches shall not be allowed to vote for themselves or for their own players for any of the awards. Ballots shall be distributed to head coaches upon conclusion of all Conference games.
3. **All-Conference Teams:**
 - a. The All-Conference team shall consist of a 15-player first team and a 15-player second team. Each team shall consist of a catcher, first baseman, second baseman, shortstop, third baseman, left fielder, center fielder, right fielder, designated hitter, utility player, a relief pitcher and four starting pitchers. Coaches can only nominate a player for one position on the All-Conference team. (*Revised October 2014*)
 - b. The All-Conference team shall be recognized in a Conference media release and shall receive certificates from the Conference office. The award winners will be announced on the day before the championship. (*Revised January 2001*)
4. **All-Rookie Team:**
 - a. The All-Rookie team shall consist of a 9-player team. The team shall consist of the top 9 rookies receiving votes, regardless of position. Each coach can nominate up to three rookies (a player in his first year of NCAA eligibility) for the team.
 - b. The All-Rookie team shall be recognized in a Conference media release and shall receive certificates from the Conference office. The award winners will be announced on the day before the championship.
5. **Individual Awards:** Individual awards from the Conference office shall be provided to the Player and Pitcher of the Year, the Rookie of the Year and to the Coach of the Year.

6. **Regular Season Champion:** A team trophy shall be awarded to the regular season champion.
7. **All-Championship Team:** The All-Championship team shall consist of 13 players regardless of position and shall be selected by the participating coaches. One player shall be selected from the first two teams eliminated; two players from the next two teams eliminated; three players from the runner-up team and four players from the championship team. The Most Outstanding Player shall be one of the four players selected from the championship team. Members of the All-Championship team shall receive plaques. *(Revised July 2010, August 2015)*
8. **Championship Team Awards:** A team trophy shall be awarded to both the championship team and the runner-up. Additionally, members of the championship team shall receive individual champion gifts.
9. **Fans' Choice Player of the Year:** America East Fans, through on-line voting, will select an America East Fans' Choice Player of the Year. *(Revised August 2015)*