

2016 and 2017 NCAA Softball Rules Changes and Common Practice Updates

<p>2.12</p>	<p><i>Regarding the foul pole color and height...</i> The foul pole shall be a single color pole that extends vertically upward... The pole should extend a minimum of ten, or the recommended height of at least twenty, feet from the ground... In addition, it is recommended that the color of the foul pole should contrast not only the ball but also with the background so it will stand out, preferably white or optic orange. Beginning in 2018, foul poles on institutional fields shall be a minimum of ten feet high and shall be either white or optic orange.</p> <p>Rationale: Clarifies that the pole shall be a single color, preferably white or optic orange, to enhance the umpire's ability to correctly rule on a batted ball near the pole. There is a phase in time for replacing a short pole with a taller one as well as the requirement for white or optic orange.</p>		
<p>New 2.17.2 Also 12.12.3.7, 12.12.8.5</p>	<p><i>Regarding alternative, non-traditional fields...</i> When playing on a non-regulation field (i.e. a dome or multiuse facility) due to weather conditions, the field should have minimum fence distances as noted in Rule 2.11. If the actual fence distances are shorter and a fly, fair batted ball clears this distance, the batter shall be awarded a ground rule double, not a home run, and each base runner advanced two bases.</p> <p>Rationale: Many makeshift facilities are too short to meet the minimum home run fence distances so in an effort to more closely reflect what would have happened had the field been regulation and to not skew player/team statistics, this clarifies that a ground rule double is awarded rather than an out-of-the-park home</p>		