

SEC Makes Play Clock in College Baseball Here to Stay

Written by Devon Teeple
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It has been nearly one year since the [Biz of Baseball](#) reported on bringing a play clock into college baseball tournaments.

As a quick refresher, the Southeastern Conference, one of the NCAA's most dominant conferences, suggested a new rule, one that would promote the game of baseball in a way that would arguably benefit the game by speeding it up.

There are two ways you can view this scenario.

The traditionalist will be aghast at such a radical change in the game. A rule or suggestion so far off the beaten path, that the word mockery is putting it nicely.

If you are a new generation of fans, a play clock might deal with some of the problems that have plagued getting games completed in a timely fashion in a society moving at an accelerated pace.

Using personal experience as an example, the game is perfect just the way it is. If you are the casual fan, the one looking for home runs and Playstation like statistics, you want action-packed, high scoring, home run laden contests, all in less than two hours.

Whether the SEC is favouring the latter is up for debate, nonetheless, this change -- this evolution of a rule -- can make the game more enjoyable and television friendly.

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The rules are as follows;

The 20-second play clock begins;

- With no runners are on base
- A ball is called if the ball is not pitched within 20 seconds
- A strike is called on the batter, if he is not ready 5 seconds before time expires

The 90-second play clock begins;

- When the last out is made, and ends when the pitcher begins his windup
- Batting team is penalized a strike if they are not ready in 90 seconds
- Fielding team is penalized a ball if they are not ready in 90 seconds
- Half-inning clock is extended to 105 seconds for televised games
- Play begins whether the network is ready or not.

A report in [USA Today](#), confirmed that the SEC was the only conference implementing this new strategy when the 2010 tournament began.

Viewing this objectively, a play clock will speed up the game. Previous tournament games eclipsed the three hour mark and did not finish before 1:00 am.

With that said, the NCAA released a statement saying that the play clock will be ruled with an iron fist by the umpires in the SEC, the regular season and on the "Road to Omaha" for the upcoming season.

[According to Tim Weiser, deputy commissioner of the Big 12 Conference](#) and chair of the Division I Baseball Committee, these changes will be best enforced "by the umpires at the championships".

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We've heard that some conferences are planning to have a visible pitch clock and some aren't," Weiser said. "That means umpiring crews in some parts of the country need to be experienced with that clock. That's why we don't want to have umpires' first experiences with the visible clocks be in the championship."

What once seemed like an experiment has become a reality.

In an age where society wants results as quick as possible, this is the best solution available. If it takes off that is another story, but as history suggests, everything is in need for a change. Better or for worse.

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