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The following is the result of the Purdue University (Purdue) on field protest of their final game against the Indiana University (Indiana) scheduled on 4/12/15.

Game protested by Purdue for UMPIRE DECISION IN VIOLATION OF NCBA RULES. Umpire Decision in violation of NCBA rules is an on field protest. On field protests as described in NCBA Rule 24.02.2 are any on field protests by the 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.

**Requested Action:** Forfeit

**Protest:**

Purdue is protesting their 9-inning 11:00 am game on 4/12/15, requesting a forfeit. Purdue is alleging that the Indiana head coach made two visits to the pitcher during the top of the 6<sup>th</sup> inning requiring the pitcher to be removed and not to be allowed to pitch for the remainder of the game.

NCAA Rule 9 Section 4-b: If a coach or his nonplaying representative goes to the mound a second time in the inning to talk to the same pitcher, the pitcher must be removed from the pitchers position for the remainder of the game. The coach is to indicate the relief pitcher to an umpire immediately after crossing the foul line.

**Investigation:**

After receiving the official protest forms from Purdue their record of what happened is listed below which was in their official protest.

PURDUE UNIVERSITY IS PROTESTING THE GAME AGAINST INDIANA UNIVERSITY PLAYED ON SUNDAY, APRIL 12, 2015 AT BLOOMINGTON NORTH HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL FIELD. SPECIFICALLY, PURDUE UNIVERSITY IS PROTESTING AN ILLEGAL SUBSTITUTION PERFORMED BY INDIANA UNIVERSITY. IN THE TOP OF THE 6<sup>TH</sup> INNING, INDIANA UNIVERSITY HEAD COACH MADE TWO VISITS TO THE MOUND, REQUIRING AN AUTOMATIC REMOVAL OF THE PITCHER IN THE GAME. # 19 MUELLER WAS THE STARTING PITCHER FOR INDIANA UNIVERSITY AND WAS STILL IN THE GAME TO BEGIN THE TOP OF THE 6<sup>TH</sup> INNING. THE ORDER OF EVENTS FOR THE TOP OF THE 6<sup>TH</sup> INCLUDE: #20 ARROYAVE (PURDUE) LEADING OFF THE INNING WITH A 4-3 GROUNDOUT, #22 O'BRIEN (PURDUE) WALK, #25 CANEPA (PURDUE) HIT-BY-PITCH, TIMEOUT CALLED BY INDIANA HEAD COACH TO MAKE A VISIT TO THE MOUND (2<sup>ND</sup> TOTAL OF GAME, 1<sup>ST</sup> OF INNING), #23 SIPE (PURDUE) OUT BY INFIELD FLY RULE, #10 BENSON (PURDUE) WALK TO LOAD THE BASES, THEN #6 GEGG (PURDUE) WAS IN THE BOX. AFTER A FIRST PITCH BALL, THE INDIANA HEAD COACH MADE ANOTHER VISIT TO THE MOUND (3<sup>RD</sup> OF GAME, 2<sup>ND</sup> OF INNING). AT THE TIME, THE HOME PLATE UMPIRE REQUIRED THE HEAD COACH TO REMOVE THE STARTING PITCHER #19 MUELLER. AT THE TIME, THE UMPIRE INFORMED THE INDIANA HEAD COACH HE HAD TO REMOVE THE PITCHER DUE TO THE TOTAL OF 3 VISITS BEING REACHED; HOWEVER THE PITCHER ACTUALLY NEEDED TO BE REMOVED DUE TO THE NUMBER OF VISITS PER THAT INNING. #19 MOVED TO SHORT STOP AT THAT TIME. PER NCAA RULE 9-4-B, THE PITCHER WAS REQUIRED TO BE REMOVED FROM PITCHING AND MUST NOT BE ALLOWED TO PITCH AGAIN AT ANY POINT IN THE GAME. IN THE TOP OF THE 7<sup>TH</sup> INNING, INDIANA COACH MADE ANOTHER VISIT TO THE MOUND AND RE-ENTERED #19 MUELLER TO PITCH. AT THAT TIME, PURDUE HEAD COACH LUKE VERSPRILLE QUESTIONED THE HOME PLATE UMPIRE IF THAT WAS A LEGAL MOVE AND WAS TOLD IT WAS ACCEPTABLE PER MODIFIED HIGH SCHOOL RULES AS HE WAS INFORMED WE WERE PLAYING BY THE INDIANA UNIVERSITY CLUB TEAM. AT THIS POINT, COACH LUKE VERSPRILLE INFORMED HIM, WE ARE PLAYING BY NCAA DIVISION 1 RULES WITH SOME MODIFICATIONS AND REQUESTED IF THE UMPIRE HAD A RULE BOOK WITH HIM. PER THE HOME PLATE UMPIRE, HE REITERATED HE DID NOT



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HAVE ONE AS HE WAS INFORMED WE WERE PLAYING A MODIFIED HIGH SCHOOL GAME. WITH THAT PURDUE HEAD COACH, IMMEDIATELY INFORMED THE UMPIRE HE WOULD BE APPEALING THE GAME FOR AN ILLEGAL SUBSTITUTION. THE HOME PLATE UMPIRE THEN INFORMED THE INDIANA HEAD COACH OF THE APPEAL TO WHICH THE INDIANA TEAM DID NOT MAKE ANY ADJUSTMENTS. PLAY RESUMED WITH #19 MUELLER PITCHING. #19 COMPLETED THE GAME IN WHICH INDIANA UNIVERSITY WON 5-4.

After reviewing that the protest it was determined that it was a valid one, the NCBA sent the protest form over to Indiana for their response to the protest. Their response is below:

*"It was not the second visit of the inning! He had made three visits, but the other two were in previous innings. Since the pitching change was not 1. A result of two visits in the inning OR 2. A visit after all three "free" visits were used (it was the 3rd/last "free" visit of the game), then Rule 9.4.B does not apply, and Rule 9.4.E does apply:*

*"e. A pitcher who is removed from the pitching position but remains in the game as a defensive player may return to the mound only once with the exceptions of 7-2-c-[5] and 9-4-b provisions."*

*We have no markings of mound visits, although after reviewing the score book for the game, we are positive he made a mound visit in the 4th inning and reasonably sure he made one in the 5th inning.*

*We aren't denying that if two visits were made in the 6th inning that I should have been taken out of the game. Bob Morgan, our head coach (former Indiana head coach, with over 1,000 Division I wins), was upset that he had to take me out because of the improperly applied "three visit rule", not that he had to take me out because it was his second visit of the inning."*

*Intuitively, Purdue is implying a seasoned baseball coach doesn't know a widely known rule (the second visit of an inning necessitates a pitching change, a rule that is the same in high school and NCAA/NCBA), which doesn't make any sense. The reason Bob took me out was because of the "three free visit" rule, not the "two visit in an inning rule", because that was his first visit to the mound of the inning."*

Since conflicting stories were provided from both teams, the NCBA reached out to the umpire in chief and his reasoning for taking the pitcher out of the game during the top of the 6<sup>th</sup> inning. His response is below:

*"I removed the pitcher in the sixth not because of a second visit in the same inning (I don't remember two visits in that inning). I removed him because it was the IU coach's third overall visit of the game and I miss calculated, thinking it was his fourth visit, when it wasn't. We allowed the IU pitcher to come back in (re-enter) as a pitcher two innings later because he stayed the game and was not substituted out."*

As stated in the Purdue protest and confirmed by the umpire, the umpire removed the pitcher in the 6<sup>th</sup> inning due to the 3<sup>rd</sup> visit by the head coach. NCAA Rule 9 Section 4-a: A coach is allowed three free trips to the mound in a game, plus one extra free trip in the event of an extra inning game. 1) A free trip is one in which the coach does not remove the pitcher.

The umpire's decision to remove Indiana's pitcher is indeed a decision by the umpire in violation of NCAA/NCBA rules. Since NCBA follows NCAA rules, coaches are allowed three free visits without having to



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remove the pitcher. Since the umpire required the pitcher to be removed, the starting pitcher moved to a defensive position and then returned to pitch in a later inning.

This move is allowed per NCAA rule 9 Section 4-e which states, “A pitcher who is removed from the pitching position but remains in the game as a defensive player may return to the mound only once with the exceptions of 7-2-c [5] and 9-4-b provisions.

**Ruling:** Protest Denied – The NCBA would agree that if in fact the Indiana Head Coach did visit the pitcher twice in the same inning that the pitcher would need to be removed and not allowed to pitch for the remainder of the contest. That was disputed by the umpire and cannot be proven. However, the umpires stated he misinterpreted the three free visit rule and made the pitcher leave the pitching position when he shouldn't have. Since the pitcher was removed due to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Free visit, he was immediately put into a defensive position (never left the game) where he was then put back into the pitching position later in the game which is allowed per NCAA rules. Therefore Indiana had made no rule violation during the contest.

**Christian Smith**  
**VP of Division I Baseball Operations**