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Disciplinary Action

March 25th, 2020

The following is a description of an incident that took place on March 7th, 2020 during a double header between visitor Pittsburg State & home team Missouri.

INCIDENT: On March 9th, 2020 at 12:02pm EST, Dir. of DI Baseball Operations, Eric Curitore, received an email from the local umpire assignor who oversees booking umpires for all Missouri's home games with a subject of "ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION AT NCBA EVENTS."

Through back & forth communication via email and phone, the NCBA received the following statements from both umpires who worked both games that day:

Umpire #1:

"After a very tumultuous 1st game which Pittsburg State lost, they proceeded to go to the parking lot. While sitting on the back of a pickup truck, the 3rd base coach then opened & consumed a beer – openly & with little regards to the rules, regulations or expectations set forth by their governing body. My partner & I were changing out just a few cars down & across the drive from them so there was little to no possible distractions or obstructions as to our view of their actions. My partner even remarked to me something to the effect of, "You see that?! They're over there just drinking beer out in the open!"

Umpire #2:

"When my partner & I went to the parking lot (between games) to change the Pittsburg State team was at their vehicles. They were making some wise cracks as a player with a lifted white truck called to me. He was still in uniform & he was asking if I wanted a "cold one". I could see they were offering me a beer. I told them no thank you. It was very clear they had a cooler ready to go with multiple players huddling around it."

The following is a statement from the umpire assignor:

"I spoke separately with each umpire & I was astonished by the reported actions against the Pittsburg State players. I requested both umpires provide you a statement (above) detailing the situation. I have absolutely no reason to doubt the account of either umpire as I have not only worked with each of them, but have also scheduled them to work games in prior years."

The following is a statement made from Missouri's Club Baseball President:

"As I was walking back to the dugout (to prepare for Game 2), I passed a group of Pitt State players, and said something along the lines of "Hey guys, don't go too far. I just talked to the umpires and they said 15-20 minutes." One Pitt State player, I don't recall his number, responded "Oh, no problem man, I'm just going to run and shotgun a beer real quick and I'll be back."

After reviewing the disturbing allegations reported by the umpiring crew & Missouri, Eric Curitore & the NCBA deemed that this should be investigated further & began an investigation into the incident.

The NCBA's stance on alcohol is listed in NCBA rule 22.03.1: "By signing the liability waiver each player agrees that the use of drugs, alcohol, or any other substances that could cause danger or detrimental effects upon the participant's performance as a member of this organization is strictly prohibited during NCBA Sanctioned Competition."

The next morning, Eric Curitore emailed Pittsburg State's Club Sports Department to set up a time to talk about the events that unfolded the weekend prior. Upon talking via phone later that day, the NCBA allowed Pittsburg State to conduct an internal investigation & to notify the NCBA of their findings. The NCBA has a set precedence of disciplinary action regarding drinking and notified Pittsburg State Administration on what information they needed in order to penalize the Pittsburg State team, should the allegations be factual.

Pittsburg State's Associate Director Campus Recreation, Steven Lilly, supplied the NCBA with a full report of findings through their investigation.

The following was determined:

- The alcohol consumption took place in the parking lot in-between Game 1 & Game 2 during Saturday's double-header.
- Three players were involved – Individual #1 (Player), Individual #2 (Player) & Individual #3 (3rd base coach)
- Individual #1 & Individual #2 did not play in Game 2.
- Individual #3 offered both umpires a beer in the parking lot.
- Individual #3 was on the field under the influence coaching 3rd during Game 2.
- Individual #3 holds the officer position of treasurer within the team.
- Pittsburg State's Head Coach/President, was present on Saturday.
- Pittsburg State's Vice President, was not present for Saturday's games.

Pittsburg State's Club Sports Department imposed the following Disciplinary Actions:

- Individual #1, Individual #2 & Individual #3 will all be suspended for its team next three games.

-Every player on the active roster including coaching staff, will take the NFHS sportsmanship course, and will deliver a copy of the certification showing they passed/completed the quiz by Friday, March 20th. Failure on their part will result in team travel suspension.

NCBA Disciplinary Action:

After reviewing the facts as well as the disciplinary precedent set forth by the UC – Santa Cruz incident on March 15th, 2015 and the SUNY Buffalo incident on April 13th, 2019 the NCBA is issuing the following penalties:

-Pittsburg State Club Baseball will be placed on Probation for the remainder of the 2019-20 season in addition to the entire 2020-2021 season for conduct of their baseball operations in a manner which is VERY much unacceptable by NCBA standards.

- Pittsburg State Club Baseball will be eligible for post-season play, but will be INELGIBLE for the at-large bid selection for the 2019-2020 season as well as the 2020-2021 season.



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-The NCBA is in agreement with Pittsburg State's Club Sports Department decision to suspend Individual #1 & Individual #2 for the teams next three NCBA Sanctioned Games. Regardless if they played the next game or not, they are NCBA rostered players who directly violated NCBA rules through their consumption of alcohol.

- Individual #3 will be suspended for the remainder of the 2019-2020 season. He may not compete in any NCBA Sanctioned Baseball Games as a player, coach, or manager nor will he be allowed to be on the field or in the dugout. He is not eligible to hold any officer title/role when dealing with the NCBA moving forward. Individual #3 not only consumed alcohol, but also participated in the competition under the influence of alcohol. If that wasn't enough, doing so while holding two positions (coach & officer) within the team is completely inexcusable. The NCBA expects far more from individuals who have such direct involvement within their teams operations on & off the field.

-Pittsburg State's Head Coach/President will be suspended for his teams next three NCBA Sanctioned Games. He may not compete as a player, coach, or manager. He was the highest-ranking individual for the team & was present during these events. It is his lack of leadership & blatant disregard of his surroundings that caused these events to take place. Not to mention possibly put others at risk due to the circumstances.

- Pittsburg State's Vice President will not receive any disciplinary action as he was not present during any of the games where the incident took place.

Lastly, as a reminder to all reading this, the NCBA wants the final note that was stated by the Commissioner of the NCBA, Sandy Sanderson, in an previous incident where drinking was taking place to be a reminder that actions like these are not acceptable and will be punished severely.

“The NCBA has worked exceptionally hard to raise both the level of play as well as the public persona regarding the validity of collegiate club baseball. When the NCBA first started in 2000, the term “club” was often confused with the term “intramural” which brought about public images of “pickup” or “sandlot” baseball. Thus the NCBA expects its member teams and participants to conduct themselves with a minimal level of common sense which protects the integrity and image of the NCBA and the game of baseball itself. When NCBA Sanctioned Baseball Games are treated like “Beer League Softball”, the credibility of the NCBA as a legitimate collegiate baseball league is tarnished. The NCBA is proud of the fact that we are able to facilitate the opportunity for college students to play competitive baseball. More so, we are proud of the growth in reputation that collegiate club baseball has achieved since the NCBA's inception, and we will not allow one team or one individual to jeopardize that reputation. We owe it to all our member teams and participants to protect it for both club baseball players now and in the future.”

NCBA President and Commissioner, Sandy Sanderson.

Eric Curitore
Director of DI Baseball Operations
National Club Baseball Association