

March 1st^h, 2017

The NCBA is formally announcing that it re-opened an investigation into the recent protest ruling stemming from Rice University's off field protest against Lamar University. Rice initially protested Lamar for using an ineligible player under a different name on the lineup card. The name listed was that of a player who was actually eligible on the roster (Christian Dick). Following their loss in the game, Rice personally looked into the situation regarding the true alias of the player who pitched against them. The NCBA received Rice's off field protest the following day which provided sufficient amounts of evidence, which was later confirmed by the NCBA, that the player who pitched against them was indeed an ineligible player at the time (Korey Clark). Lamar officers and coaches appeared to make attempts to cover up their actions, though repeatedly stood by their notion that the situation was simply a mistake and misunderstanding.

The NCBA's current off field protest protocol requires the team to submit an official protest form in the NCBA, along with any and all evidence into the situation, within the appropriate timeframe. Rice met these requirements. Rice protested Lamar violating Rule 24.03.2.1:

24.03.2.1 The protest of the ineligibility of a player who is officially on the roster can be protested at any time provided the protest is filed within 24 hours of having determined the player should not have been eligible to compete in an NCBA Sanctioned Baseball Game.

The NCBA worked with Jason Harrington, Lamar's Coordinator of Intramural & Club Sports, to see if this was in fact just a simple mistake/misunderstanding as the team stated, or if there was purposeful intent to play an ineligible player and cover it up. Jason stated they had no reason to believe the team was purposely covering anything up after meeting with them:

"After speaking with my club officers, and knowing their character, I honestly feel that this was the case of it being a mistake. Neither Ben nor Reid had been able to meet (the two players involved) prior to the game and it seems to be a mistake in identity and knowing who would show up. I've checked both players in question, and they are both eligible to compete per our university/club policies. Our club did not try using ringers. Both players completed the necessary forms and roster checks to be eligible to compete and represent Lamar University."

Through much consideration and dialogue between both teams and the NCBA front office, the NCBA will be granting Rice's initial protest, ultimately reversing the score of the game as a 7-0 victory in favor of Rice. The initial 3 game suspensions of Ben Gunter (Lamar VP & Coach) & Reid Johnson (Lamar President) will remain.

Rice legally requested action against the eligibility of the player actually listed on the lineup card, who was also listed on their official roster through the NCBA site. The conclusion was evident in that while Christian Dick was 100% eligible through the NCBA office on Lamar's official roster, his eligibility was in question as another player (Korey Clark) was listed under his name, which ultimately questions the eligibility status of Christian Dick to begin with.

Sincerely,

Eric Curitore



Director of DII Baseball Operations