

Machine-Pitch I Regulations

It is the purpose of this program to teach good sportsmanship, the basic rules of baseball, and how to win and lose with poise, as good players should. The emphasis is not on winning the game, but on learning to act as ladies and gentlemen during the course of playing the game. The spectators and coaches must keep this priority in mind. The players, coaches, and spectators are not to “boo” or heckle the opposing players, coaches, or other spectators. Any disputes are to be handled by the coaches in a quiet manner away from the players. Remember that this is a game and it is played for fun!

1. GAME PROCEDURES

- (a) A minimum of 8 players is needed to begin a game. If fewer than 8 players are ready to play 15 minutes after the scheduled start time the game will be considered a forfeit. The forfeit score is 5-0 but coaches are encouraged to play a practice game with borrowed players. The forfeit game score will stand as official. Report forfeits to the coordinator immediately. The coordinator will make any necessary changes to keep teams playing. Consistent forfeits are to be avoided.
- (b) Players are required to wear their uniform (jersey and cap) to all games. Long pants should also be worn.
- (c) Each team will play all players in the field using a standard infield with the remaining players in the outfield, playing at least 25 feet behind the infield. After the start of an inning no player shall be moved to a different fielding position (except to replace an injured player).
- (d) No player can play more than 3 innings in the infield (pitcher, catcher, first, second, shortstop, or third). No player may play a particular infield position more than one inning per game (except where only a minimum of eight players are available, or the game goes into an extra inning).
- (e) An outfielder (including those players designated as back-up for first, second, or third base) must not enter the infield to play the ball. (Playing out-of-position does not teach the team concept and does nothing for the player playing the infield position.)
- (f) Every member of the team will be in the batting order. A copy of the complete line-up in batting order, with names and uniform numbers, should be exchanged prior to the start of the game.
- (g) Each team shall keep a box score by individual name and the scorekeepers shall agree on the score at the end of each half inning.
- (h) NO pitch shall be thrown after 1 ¼ hours from the scheduled game start time and the score shall revert back to the previous completed inning.
NOTE: An inning starts upon the 3rd out of the previous inning or when a runner scores which results in the maximum runs per inning limit to be reached for the previous inning
- (i) Each game will consist of five innings with a maximum of 7 runs per inning. (The inning ends when three outs are made, or the maximum of 7 runs has been scored.)
In the case of a tie after five full innings of play, ONE extra inning will be played (time curfew permitting). If the score remains tied after both teams have batted in the 6th inning, the game will be considered a tie and the game will end.
- (j) A “complete” game is defined as any game in which the visiting team has fully completed at least three times at bat and the home team is leading, or the home team has fully completed three times at bat.
- (k) A “complete” game that ends in a tie will not be replayed.
- (l) A game started but not reaching a “complete” game status must be rescheduled and completely restarted with the score at 0 - 0.
- (m) In case of a game that has reached the “complete” game status and subsequent thereto the game is terminated during an inning because of darkness or weather conditions, the score will revert back to that at the end of the last complete inning played. If this is a tie, see Rule 1.(k) above.
- (n) There are no formal “standings” tracking wins and losses. The players should strive to win, but coaches and parents should not dwell on whether the game was won or lost.

2. COACHING and UMPIRING

- (a) The head coach of the batting team will serve as the umpire at home plate. The home plate umpire will be responsible for the batter and for plays at home plate.
The head coach of the batting team will designate two assistant coaches who will coach the runners at first and third base, and will serve as umpires at these bases while their team is batting.
- (b) The coaches of the team in the field will stand behind the infielders and coach the players on position, plays on runners, and will serve as umpire for calls in the field and at second base. Coaches are to stay out of the infield to facilitate its use by the players. There will be a maximum of three coaches in the outfield at one time.

- (c) The coach/umpire making a call has the last say on the call. Perfection is not required and changes can be easily made. A decision should be changed if it is incorrect. Do your best on judgment calls and call the coordinator if there is a rule problem.
- (d) Players, coaches, and spectators shall not be allowed to harass the opposing players or the umpire at any time. Penalty shall be ejection from playing field by the umpire after one warning. The Head Coach is assigned responsibility over the game conduct of EVERYONE associated with that coach's team; coaches, players, fans and parents. Umpires will address concerns about good sportsmanship with the head coach.
- (e) Any player or coach, who, in the judgment of the umpire, intentionally throws a bat or helmet in a malicious manner, shall be subject to immediate ejection from the game by the umpire.
- (f) Every precaution should be taken to prevent protests. All coaches should bring the facts of the protest to the opposing coach prior to their actual occurrence if at all possible. Report protests to the coordinator immediately. No protests are allowed on judgment calls.

3. PITCHING MACHINE

- (a) A coach from the batting team will operate the pitching machine, and will signal the batter and umpire prior to the pitch.
- (b) The pitching machine will be positioned approximately 28 feet from home plate on the line from home plate to second base.
- (c) The power cord for the pitching machine will be treated as a normal part of the field of play.
- (d) The speed of the machine will be set to 25 mph and will remain at one setting for the entire game. (If the machine is not calibrated for mph the appropriate setting should be obtained from the division coordinator.)
- (e) The player in the pitcher's position will be positioned on the first base side of the mound.
- (f) A "soft core" baseball will be used with the pitching machine.
- (g) Any batted ball striking the pitching machine or the coach operating the pitching machine is a dead ball; the batter is awarded first base and any runners will advance only as required by such an award.
- (h) Any thrown ball striking the pitching machine, the coach operating the machine, or the screen remains in play.

4. BATTING

- (a) Batters, base runners, and the player in the pitcher's position must wear a helmet at all times. The catcher must wear a helmet and catcher's mask at all times.
- (b) The on-deck position is NOT used. Players must remain on the bench. Only coaches and players are allowed in the bench area. All unauthorized personnel should be asked to leave the playing field by the head coaches.
- (c) Prior to pitching, the coach/pitcher will check with the coach on the field to determine if the fielding team is ready. The player in the pitcher's position must be positioned with one foot on the pitching rubber during the coach's pitch.
- (d) Any hit ball not traveling beyond the line at the 15-foot distance from home plate will be called a foul ball. The home plate umpire will judge the distance and make a call of fair or foul as soon as possible and as loudly as possible. If an infielder fields the ball within the 15-foot radius and makes a play, the home plate umpire should have already made the call as to fair or foul. Thus, the infielders do not have to wait until the ball clears the line if in the home plate umpire's judgment the ball will clear the line. All runners should run on such a play without waiting for the umpire's call.
- (e) There is no bunting. Every batter is to take a full swing at the ball.
- (f) There are no strikeouts. Each player stays at bat until hitting a fair ball. If the player fails to hit a fair ball after FIVE (5) pitches, a batting tee shall be used.
- (g) No walks will be awarded to any batter (except in the case when a player is hit by a pitched ball).
- (h) Throwing the bat is an automatic out after one warning to the offending team from the home plate umpire. When a warning is given, a "no pitch" is called and all runners return to their bases. (This is a critical rule and must be stressed to the players early and often.)
- (i) Any batted ball striking a runner in the field of play before being touched by a fielder results in that runner being called out. The batter is awarded first base and the other runners return to their previous bases (except when required to advance by the batter gaining first base).
- (j) Any batted ball striking the pitching machine or the coach operating the pitching machine is a dead ball; the batter is awarded first base and any runners will advance only as required by such an award.

5. FIELDING and BASE RUNNING

- (a) "Machine-Pitch I" is not a running game and marginal decisions should put base runners back, not forward.

- (b) Before the signal is given to the pitching coach that play is to begin, the second base coach must check the players are in the proper positions and know their assignments.
- (c) Any ball thrown out of the playing field from the outfield or infield shall advance runners one base from the base they are going to. The field of play is marked by an imaginary line from the backstop to the outfield parallel to the first base line, and parallel to the third base line.
- (d) A thrown ball hitting a player in the bench area, a spectator, or coach, shall advance runners one base beyond the base they are going to.
- (e) A ball thrown to a base, not fielded but remaining in the field of play will remain in play and runners advance at their own risk.
- (f) If a ball is intentionally thrown out of the field of play the home plate umpire will determine the bases to be advanced.
- (g) Base running stops when a ball is returned from the outfield and enters the infield. If the runners are more than half way to a base, they may continue to that base at their own risk after the ball enters the infield. If the runners are less than half way to a base when the ball enters the infield, they must return to their prior base. Base coaches for the batting team make this call. Disputes over this rule should be settled quietly among the coaches, with attention given to Regulation 5. (a).
- (h) If the throw from the outfield is to catch a runner, the ball remains in play and all runners may continue to run at their own risk. If the throw is to end a play, Regulation 5. (g). applies. The home plate umpire makes the determination if the throw was to catch a runner, or end the play.
- (i) The batter-runner is allowed to turn toward second after passing first, but if an attempt is made to advance to second the runner is liable to be tagged out.
- (j) No run scores on a play where the third out is made: by the batter-runner being put out before reaching first base; or by any runner being forced out.
- (k) The batter-runner shall return to the bench after being put out. Only the "safe" runners will remain to run the bases.

6. *INCLEMENT WEATHER*

- (a) In the event of inclement weather, it will be the decision of the coordinator to postpone the game. If the coordinator is not available, the head coaches from both teams will make the decision. In an effort to play as many games according to the published schedule, the decision to postpone a game will be made not more than one hour before the scheduled start time. No game will start or continue during an electrical storm. At the first sign of any lightning all play will stop immediately. The home team coach will immediately inform the Scheduler of the postponement. When the tornado-warning siren is sounded, all play will stop immediately, the game is postponed, and all players, spectators and coaches should immediately seek shelter. Coaches should be certain that no players are left at the field without a means to get to a safe place.
- (b) Postponed games can only be made up after receiving a make up time from the Scheduler. (For games that have been scheduled to be played at a Gatewood field the Division Coordinator serves the role of Scheduler.) It is the responsibility of the head coach of each team (or substitute) to call the Scheduler to receive the scheduled make up time. A game that has been postponed due to inclement weather (or for darkness) and is not a complete game will be completely restarted by taking the next available make-up time not on the same day as the original game. A make-up time that causes a team to play two games on one day will only be used in special circumstances and will require approval by the President, Vice-President and Division Coordinator.

7. *MISCELLANEOUS*

- (a) The home team is responsible for getting the bases from the equipment shed before the game. (Make sure the equipment shed is locked during the game.)
- (b) After the game, the players and coaches are responsible for leaving their respective bench areas clean.

The home team is responsible for putting away the equipment after the game, and to make sure that the equipment shed is locked