



Saginaw Little League – P.O. Box 6206, Saginaw, MI 48608

## Machine Pitch Division Local Rules

### Overview

The Machine Pitch division is an *instructional* division. The overall objective is to develop a player's core skills (hitting, fielding, throwing, base running and overall baseball knowledge) in a fun environment. It is important that the players enjoy themselves and develop so that they continue to play in future years.

### I. General Rules

1. Games shall last 4 innings. If the home team is leading after the top of the 4<sup>th</sup>, the game shall be over.
  - a. No new inning shall be started after 1 hour 30 minutes has elapsed. The in-progress inning shall be completed.
2. The **home team** is responsible for keeping the official score book. The score book must be reviewed and signed by each manager and returned to the league office following each game.
  - a. Defensive positions each inning must be recorded.
  - b. The home team manager signs the visitor side, the visiting team manager signs the home side.
  - c. Managers are advised to check the score book each half inning for accuracy.
3. The **visiting team** is responsible for running the scoreboard if one is available on the field.
4. Defensive substitution is unlimited.
5. Each player must play at least **three (3)** innings per complete game.
6. Each player must play at least **two (2)** innings in the infield.
7. The manager and up to **three (3)** coaches may be in the dugout for games. Coaches must be approved by the Board of Directors following the Manager/Coach selection policy.
8. Base coaches must be adults.
9. Managers and coaches may not touch base runners while the ball is in play.
  - a. **EXCEPTION:** In the event of an injury managers/coaches are to attend to the injured player immediately.
  - b. Umpire shall declare an immediate dead-ball to allow for attention to the injured player.
  - c. The batter/runner will be awarded first base if the ball was in fair territory when the injury occurred, and all runners shall be granted 1 base.
10. **No umpires will be provided.** The offensive base coaches and coach operating the pitching machine shall call safe/out.
11. Managers must exchange batting lineups with both names and numbers before each game.
12. The home team playing the last game of the day shall rake the dirt surfaces, and putting all equipment away, including returning the league bats to the board member on duty.
13. The visiting team shall empty the dugout trash cans and sweep out the dugouts.
14. Managers, coaches and spectators may not use artificial noisemakers, including but not limited to: air horns, bells, thunder sticks, vuvuzelas, etc.
  - a. Umpires shall issue one (1) warning to the manager(s) regarding noise makers. Subsequent notices shall result in the removal of the manager from the dugout.

## II. Pitching Machine Rules

1. Each batter will be allowed **four (4)** pitches. If a batter has not hit the ball fair within those **four (4)** pitches, players will have the option of **two (2)** attempts from the tee or **two (2)** additional attempts at the manager's discretion to hit the ball into fair territory beyond the arc in front of home plate.
  - a. After the additional **two (2)** attempts, the player will be declared out, and recorded as a strike-out.
2. The umpire or defensive manager may call a "no-pitch" for machine pitches that vary significantly away from the strike zone.
3. The pitcher must have at least **one (1)** foot in the dirt of pitcher's circle until the ball crosses home plate or is put into play.
4. Catchers must catch and place balls to the side. Up to 6 balls will be on the playing field to support speed of play.
  - a. Catchers must wear appropriate equipment including a catcher's mitt and protective cup.
5. The pitching machine shall be placed with the rear foot touching, but not on, the pitching plate on the pitcher's mound.
6. The pitching machine shall use the "3" setting on the power pedal. The release adjustments shall be agreed upon by the managers before the start of the game. Once set, they may not be changed without agreement from both managers and the umpire.
  - a. If no agreement may be reached between managers, the 2 release point settings will be set to "3".

## III. Offensive Rules

1. Each player must bat in order, regardless of if they are fielding a defensive position.
2. No bunting. Players must attempt to take full swings. Batters that square to bunt will be called out, and the ball will be dead, returning any runners to their original position.
3. No leading off or base stealing. Runners may not leave the base until the ball is put into play. Teams will be issued 1 warning on the first offense, with the runners returning to their original positions, subsequent infractions will result in the runner being declared out.
4. No more than **three (3)** runs may be scored in any inning, or 3 outs, whichever occurs first.
  - a. During the regular season, if, after 4 full innings, the game is tied, the result shall be a tie.
5. The infield fly rule shall not be used.
6. Base runners must slide, feet first only, when there is a play at the base.
  - a. Headfirst slides will result in runners being called out.
7. Runners may advance 1 base, at their own risk, on an overthrow.
  - a. Additional overthrows on a play may not result in further advancement.
  - b. Overthrows to the pitcher to reach a dead ball situation are not eligible for advancement.
8. Throwing the bat shall result in the following penalties:
  - a. First offense: warning issued to the player and coach
  - b. Second offense: player shall be called out and a warning issued to the team.
  - c. Subsequent thrown bats by any player on that team shall be called out.

## IV. Defensive Rules

1. The **four (4)** outfield players must be **ten (10)** feet behind the infield dirt area before the ball is put into play.
2. Defensive players with both feet on a base on a close play shall be called for interference and the runner shall be awarded the base.
3. Defensive players on first base that have both feet on the base shall always be called for interference and the hitter/runner shall be awarded first base.