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# Rules of Play

## 8U Machine Pitch

### 2021

#### 1. General

- 1.1 Game scores are kept. The official scorebook will be kept by the home team.
- 1.2 Shoes with metal cleats or spikes are not permitted.
- 1.3 No jewelry of any kind is to be worn; except for religious and medical reasons and it must be tapped down to the body.
- 1.4 All players must wear a protective helmet (batting or catching). Cup protectors are required for catchers and are strongly recommended for other players. If player refuses to wear protective gear they will be ejected from the game.
- 1.5 The home team supplies the pitching machine and baseballs for the game. If the home team does not possess a Jugs machine, the away team should supply one.
- 1.6 There is a required meeting at home plate with both head coaches at least 5 minutes before the first pitch.
- 1.7 The game is official after 3 innings or 2 ½ innings if the home team is winning.
- 1.9 Each team is allowed two adult base coaches. No players or anyone under the age of 18 is allowed.
- 1.10 Non-Wood, No Double walled, 2 ¼" marked BPF 1.15 (Max 33") or any USA stamp baseball bat (including 2-1/4" and 2-5/8"). Use of illegal bat: 1<sup>st</sup> offense per team — remove bat from play. 2<sup>nd</sup> offense per team – batter ruled out and base runners returned to base. 3<sup>rd</sup> offense -- head coach ejected. **\*\*\*BAT RULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE IN FALL 2021\*\*\***

#### 2. Field of Play

- 2.1 The home team shall occupy the first base dugout, and is responsible for necessary preparation of the field. Preparation may include installation of bases, filling of holes, raking as required, lining the field, etc. The home team also is responsible for buying the gas for the generator, as needed. However, both teams are expected to share the field preparation if weather has created conditions that require special attention
- 2.2 The field dimensions shall be 60 feet between bases, 46 feet from home plate to pitcher's rubber, 84 feet 10 inches from home to second base.
- 2.3 The League will use a pitching machine to deliver the ball to batters. The speed of the pitching machine will be set at 36 to 40 mph depending on the machine. The objective is to deliver a consistent pitch without a large arc.

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**2.4** The pitching machine will be set up 46' from the front of home plate. An 8 foot diameter circle will be drawn around the pitching machine. For safety reasons, no player is allowed to enter that area except to return fielded ball to coach, as described in Rule 6.4. Pitcher must be outside circle when pitch is thrown, but is allowed to play to any side of the pitching machine.

**2.5** Both teams should have 10 minutes of field practice before each game, with the home team on the field for the last 10 minutes if time allows.

### **3. Umpiring**

**3.1** Coaches are responsible for umpiring. Pitching machine coach will serve as umpire for all calls (bases, home plate, outfield, fair/foul balls).

### **4. Game Play**

**4.1** Games will consist of 1 hour and 45 minutes or 6 full innings (weather permitting). No new inning may begin after 1 hour 30 minutes. Official scoring will be kept and win loss records will be maintained.

**4.2** A 5 run rule is in effect and ends an inning with less than three outs.

**4.3** If a team has less than 9 players, the opposing coach should arrange a loan of players for defensive purposes. There are no forfeits.

### **5. Offense**

**5.1** Offensive team will have a first and third base coach and a coach at home plate for the batter. The home plate coach will not enter the batter's box between pitches. **Coaches are not to hinder the steady progress of the game or interfere with play.**

**5.2** The team batting is responsible for feeding the pitching machine.

**5.3** Each batter gets 5 good pitches. A bad pitch is a pitch that hit the ground before reaching home plate or a pitch that goes over the batters head. If a bad pitch occurs the coach should call out "bad pitch". The last pitch cannot be a foul ball.

**5.4** There is no minimum distance for a hit, but intentional bunting is not allowed.

**5.5** There is no stealing or walks.

**5.6** A runner may advance (one) base per overthrow, but NOT home plate.

**5.7** A batter who intentionally or unintentionally throws a bat will get two warnings before removed from play for the remaining of that inning.

**5.8** Sliding is required to avoid contact. Head first slides are not allowed. Players should not slide into first base.

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**5.9** Stealing is not permitted. Runners may leave the base only after the ball is hit. Runners who leave early will be called out.

**5.10** If the batted ball hits any item around the pitching machine or a coach/umpire, the runners are awarded one base. The coach that is pitching should call out "dead ball".

**5.11** A runner must avoid contact when a fielder has the ball. A runner violating this rule will be ruled out and may be ejected from the game if the contact is flagrant. Ejection results in a one game suspension from the player's next game.

## **6. Defense**

**6.1** Coaches must remain in the dugout. No coaches will be allowed in the outfield.

**6.2** There will be only max of 10 players in the field: four outfielders who must play on the outfield grass; one player near the pitching machine but outside the circle; a catcher; a first baseman; a second baseman; a third baseman; a shortstop.

**6.3** Infield Fly. The rule does not apply.

**6.4** Play is stopped once the ball is in control of the pitcher when in the vicinity of the machine (vicinity is defined as being within a circle "real or imaginary" of 8' diameter centered on the pitching machine).

**6.5** A fielder not in possession of the ball or in the process of receiving the ball cannot obstruct a runner. Official baseball rules govern penalties for obstruction.

**6.6** Fielders must not stand in the baseline before the ball is hit. Coaches are responsible for reminding players to move out of the baselines.

## **7. Lineups and Substitutions**

**7.1** Head Coaches may freely substitute defensive players

**7.2** All players showing up for a game must be placed in a batting order that will not change, regardless of changes in fielding positions. All players will bat throughout the game, regardless of whether they are in defensive positions. If player arrives late they must be placed at the end of the batting order.

**7.3** Players must play in the field at least one inning in the infield, and one inning in the outfield, in each game. Infield positions are defined as p, c, 1b, 2b, 3b, ss.

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## **8. Conduct and Sportsmanship**

**8.1** The team Head Coach is responsible for exemplifying and maintaining good sportsmanship at practices and games. Please review the coaches Code of Conduct for specific conduct expectations.

**8.2** The team Head Coach is responsible for the conduct of his coaches, his players, and their parents. Everyone participating in a game must follow the rules of good sportsmanship. Communicate only to members of your own team. . Any disruptive parent or fan will be asked by the coaches to leave the field or field area.

**8.3** A player, coach or parent guilty of misconduct in the judgment of the Head Coach is subject to disciplinary action by the team's Commissioner.

**8.4.** Neither alcohol nor tobacco in any form is permitted near the playing field or in the dugouts before, during or after any practice or game. This rule applies to coaches, umpires, players, and spectators.

**8.5** Only players, coaches, and umpires are permitted on the field of play.

**8.6** Only players, coaches, and scorekeepers may stand in the dugout or sit on the team's bench.

**8.7** Any player or coach who throws or abuses equipment will be ejected from the game.

**8.8** Any coach or player ejected from a game, for any reason, is automatically suspended from the team's next game.

**8.9** Players shall be attired in their complete regulation uniform, to include belts, socks, and caps. Jerseys shall be tucked in for the entire game, including warm-ups. All coaches must be appropriately attired when at the field and must wear regulation uniforms in order to participate in regular games.

*(Intent of rule: For players, proper attire is necessary for safety and to present a professional appearance in keeping with the game of baseball. For coaches, presenting a neat and proper appearance on the part of the coaching staff sets a good example for the ballplayers and makes it apparent to the umpires and fans who is in charge of a team.)*

**8.10** Head Coaches are expected to attend all regularly scheduled games. In the event they are unable to attend a game, the designated assistant coach, or some other designated adult (someone at least 21 years of age) shall be appointed to be responsible for the head coach's duties, for that game only.

## **9. Inclement Weather**

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**9.1** In the case of a game in progress being rained out, any game passing 3 innings or 2 ½ innings if the home team is winning constitutes a complete game

**9.2** The home team Baseball Rec Commissioner, Deputy Rec Baseball Commissioner or Head Coach will decide whether a game is to be played or should be postponed because of inclement weather or poor field conditions prior to the start of the game. Once the game starts, the Head Coaches shall determine whether the game should continue.

**9.3** The home team Head Coach is responsible for checking the field in the event of inclement weather. He/she, in conjunction with his/her Baseball Rec Commissioner or Deputy Rec Baseball Commissioner, will determine whether the games can be played. If early games must be postponed, this does not mean that later games cannot be played, weather permitting.

**9.4** In a questionable situation, coaches should call their Baseball Rec Commissioner or Deputy Rec Baseball Commissioner. Players should be instructed to call the head coach or the assistant coach to obtain the status of the game. **At no time will teams practice or play games when county closes fields.**

**9.5** All officials, coaches, and players should assume that a game will be played unless they receive official notice that it has been canceled.

**9.6** A game is considered a postponed game if the first pitch is not delivered.

**9.7** The coaches should try and resolve all makeup games during a scheduled practice day. If unable to come to agreement please contact the home team Baseball Rec Commissioner and/or Deputy Rec Baseball Commissioner to help resolve. All efforts should be made to replay the game.

**9.8** If lightning is spotted by the coaches, play is to be immediately suspended and shall restart after 15 minutes from the last sighting

## **10. COVID-19 Guidelines**

**10.1** During this pandemic, coaches will take all necessary steps to ensure the safety of their players and mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Each league will issue its own specific guidelines that all opposing leagues must follow during scheduled games. As a general matter, all leagues will abide by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations to include, but not limited to, wearing masks when social distancing can't be done, maximizing social distancing, and cleaning high touch surfaces such as shared equipment. Player safety is the top priority, and coaches must work together to ensure appropriate mitigation steps are followed at all times and league rules are strictly followed.