



## PSAA League Rules: Machine Pitch Spring 2023

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### **Player Eligibility**

- 1) A Player will not be permitted to participate until the PSAA Code of Conduct is completed by the Player and parent and returned to the Coach or the Machine Pitch Director.
- 2) All Players must pay their participation fee before the first game in order to continue practicing or playing games. Payment plans are acceptable.
- 3) A player must play in their designated age group based on the player's "League Age". No playing out of the age group unless it is approved by the Commissioner.

### **Game Start Times and Time Limits**

- 1) Games are 6 innings. Home team will be the team listed last (to the right).
- 2) For Weeknights there is a 1 hour 45 minute time limit; a new inning may not start after 1 hour 45 minutes. No extra innings may be played after the time limit has expired, games will end in a tie. Extra innings may be played within the time limit.
- 3) For weekend games, there is a 2-hour time limit. If the game is tied after the time limit has been reached, one additional inning will be played. If the game remains tie after the additional inning, the game will end in a tie. If the time limit has not been reached, and the initial six innings ends in a tie, extra innings may be played within the time limit.
- 4) The umpire will keep the official clock. It is the coach's responsibility to synchronize with the official clock.
- 5) The "start" of a new inning is immediately after the 3rd out is made in the home team's at bat.

### **Inclement Weather & Rain-outs**

When possible, the baseball commissioner will call to cancel the umpire at least 1 hour prior to the scheduled start time of the game. All games stopped by an umpire or league official for weather or other reasons before the game is declared official are suspended games.

The baseball commissioner will make a list of potential make-up dates. The first rained-out game will go into the first make-up slot and so on. Exceptions will be made to avoid a team playing Friday night and again early Saturday morning. Contact the baseball commissioner for make-up date and time.

**Electrical Storms:** There will be a fifteen-minute delay for each bolt of lightning that is observed. The baseball players will be directed to the dugout during the delay. We will try to get the game in if we can, but the coaches and the umpire will use their best judgment to determine if the electrical storm is too dangerous to continue. The head coach for each team should meet with the umpire to discuss the electrical storm in an effort to determine if the game will be delayed or called off. The coaches of both teams can make their views and recommendations known to the umpire, but the umpire is the only person that can call the game off. If a coach leaves the field before the umpire has made the call, that coach will forfeit the game.

### **Field Dimensions**

Machine Pitch games will be played with 60-foot bases.

### **Pitching Machine**

1) Pitching machine will be placed at 46 feet. The settings will be: Ball Throw Arm (3), Pitch Pull Arm (3), and Foot Pedal (7). Midway point through the season (date to be determined at beginning of season), we will adjust foot pedal to (8). Adjustments will be made as necessary depending on the spring.

2) Before the start of the game, the machine should be set so the pitch is between the waist and knee level on an average size player. The umpire will approve the setting prior to the start of the game.

3) A coach will operate the machine for his own team.

### **Minimum number of players**

There will be a minimum number of 8 eligible players required to start a game, or the team forfeits. In the event of an injury, a game may be completed with less than eight players. If a team has less than 8 players, the coach is allowed to use a Park Sharon Coach Pitch player to fill the remaining roster spots. No players from Minors eligible. Substituting players must bat last and play in the outfield (this rule is the only exception for the "a player must play in the infield" rule).

### **Coaches**

- Every team may have 1 Head Coach, and 2 Assistant Coaches, as well as 1 dug out parent. The scorekeeper has the option to be in the dugout (as the 4<sup>th</sup> coach) or keep the score from the spectator area. The head coach from each team is the only coach to officially communicate with the umpires. If the head coach is not present for a game, a designated coach will be identified during the pre-game meeting.

- 1 coach may be in the outfield, until the halfway point of season (date to be determined at beginning of season) when the players have learned the game, then the coach may only be in foul territory.

## **Umpires**

There will be one umpire on the field at all times. The umpire's ruling is final. There will be no additional discussion at that time. Clarification of rules should take place between innings. Any arguments on the field by coaches, parents, or players will not be tolerated.

In the event the umpire fails to show by the scheduled start time, the home team will provide an adult representative to umpire the game and keep track of balls & strikes until the umpire arrives.

## **Guidelines for Participants**

The umpires handles unsportsmanlike conduct if the unsportsmanlike conduct is on the field of play. If an umpire has a problem with a fan, parent, or player, the umpire will seek the Head Coach of the offending team and have the Head Coach handle the situation.

## **Scoring**

The home team will keep the official scorebook. Note: Both teams are to keep score in their own scorebook. Scorekeepers should confirm scores after each half inning. Highly recommend using Gamechanger app.

## **Free Substitution**

Coaches may substitute players on defense after each half inning, without reporting to the umpire. Players may go in and out of the game at the coach's discretion, provided they are adhering to defensive play rules and not attempting to run out the time limit.

## **Injured players**

If a player is injured and is removed from the game, his/her position in the batting order is skipped with no "out" being assessed throughout the remainder of the game.

## **Disciplined or ejected players or coaches**

In the event a player is disciplined or ejected by the umpire and cannot bat, the first at bat after the removal is considered an out. Afterwards, all future times that batter's position will be skipped without an out being assessed. This rule holds for all players once the game has started, regardless of whether the player has batted in the game.

An ejected player must leave the field of play, not the park, and will be suspended from playing in his team's next game, regardless of regular season or tournament game. This rule applies to regular season end of season tournament.

If a coach is ejected from the game, the coach must exit the park and not be visible from any part of the playing field. The coach will also be suspended from participating in his team's next game, and may not be visible from any part of the field during that game. This rule applies to regular season and end of season tournament.

### **Pregame Warm-ups**

If time allows, the visiting team will have 10 minutes for infield warm-up beginning 20 minutes prior to the start of the game. The home team will then have 10 minutes for infield warm-up beginning 10 minutes prior to the start of the game. Batting practice is not allowed inside the fence or on the field during the games.

### **Continuous Batting Order**

The batting order will consist of all available players, and will be in a continuous order. In the event of a late arrival by a team member, the player will be inserted at the end of the batting order and will take their turn at bat, even if the team has already gone through the batting order. If a player is visibly sick, or injured, and must leave the field of play, no penalty applies to any of the missed at bats. All teams must roster bat. Player batting out of order will be called out. Player has not batted out of order until he receives a pitch.

### **Maximum Runs Per Inning**

Innings 1 through 5 will have a 5 run limit. **There is no run limit in the 6<sup>th</sup> inning and beyond, or if the last inning due to time is inning 1-5.**

### **Pitches & Batting**

- 1) Umpire shall declare "No Pitch" if a pitch is considered unhittable (ball hits the plate, over batter's head), but only if batter does not swing; if batter swings, it is a strike.
- 2) Each batter gets a maximum of 5 pitches; 3 strikes, and you're out. Batter will not foul out on the last pitch.
- 3) Bunting is allowed only once in an inning.
- 4) All batters and runners must wear a double ear flapped helmet while on the playing field. This includes batboys and batgirls while performing their duties. Youth coaches under 18 years of age must also adhere to this standard.
- 5) There are no bat size restrictions. Bats must be USA bats and they must be smooth and round.

- 6) A fair-batted ball hitting the pitching machine is declared a dead ball and is ruled a single. All runners advance one base from their original position.
- 7) There is no base on balls, intentional or unintentional.
- 8) Coaches must remain in the designated 1<sup>st</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> base coaching boxes or in front of their team's dugout. The Coach running the pitching machine is NOT allowed to direct the runners or batters.

### **Base Running**

- 1) All base runners will wear protective helmet, and all male players must wear a protective cup.
- 2) The batter must make contact with the ball before a base runner can leave the base. The runner will be returned back to the base if he leaves early.
- 3) Base stealing is not allowed in Machine Pitch.
- 4) The infield fly rule does not apply in Machine Pitch.
- 5) On an overthrow from an infielder to first base, no advancing beyond one base will be permitted for any runner. We want to encourage players at this age to attempt to make a play at first base without penalty. On an overthrow to all other bases, runners may advance at their own risk, however they are limited to advancing ONE base and they cannot advance on additional overthrows on the same at bat.

### **Must Avoid Contact Rule**

There is a must avoid contact rule at home plate. If the catcher is making a play on the runner at home plate, the runner must make an attempt to avoid contact. If the runner fails to attempt to avoid contact for a play at home plate, he will be called out. There is no such rule at the other bases.

- Jumping over the catcher is not allowed and the runner will be called out.
- Any player that intentionally runs into a defensive player will be called out and removed from the game. The removed player will be called out once at the next at-bat.

### **Head First Slides**

Headfirst slides are not allowed. Runners will be called out for headfirst slides.

### **Courtesy Runner**

A courtesy runner may be substituted for the next inning's catcher and pitcher, or for an injured player at the coach's discretion, with the player who made the last out. There does not need to be 2 outs for the substitute to be used. Courtesy runners are not permitted in the last inning of

the game (6<sup>th</sup> inning, extra innings, or if it has been declared the last inning by the umpire due to time limit).

### **Defensive Play**

- 1) Each available team member cannot sit out more than 2 innings. In the event of a shortened game, there will be no penalty for failure to meet this rule.
- 2) Coaches are encouraged to play their players more than the required number of innings. If a player arrives late, it is acceptable to play a minimum of 1 inning of defense and meet the playing requirement.
- 3) No player can sit out 2 consecutive innings except by his or her own choice. Failure to abide by this rule will result in a forfeited game.
- 4) Each player must play at least one full inning in the infield each game. One inning will be considered 3 consecutive outs.
- 5) Games may be started with 8 players- Under no circumstances can there be fewer than 8 players from the scheduled team. If a team has less than 8 players, that team must forfeit. If you do not have 8 players, you may use a player from the Park Sharon Coach Pitch division only, not any division above. Borrowed players must bat last and play in the outfield, and are not allowed during the End of Season Tournament.
- 6) All outfielders must be positioned at a distance of at least 12 feet behind the designated infield area.
- 7) All infield positions and the catcher position must be full if playing with at least 9 players.
- 8) Players may NOT change position during the ½ inning, after play has started, unless an injury has occurred.
- 9) Out of a team of 9 players, one player must be a catcher. The catcher must wear a head protector, body protector, **protective cup**, shin guards, and a mask with a throat protector. The head, face, dual earflaps and throat protector can be one piece.
- 10) The catcher must be located in the catcher's box, no more than 5 feet behind home plate.
- 11) If a coach feels the opposing coach has not complied with the defensive play rules, he can file a protest with the commissioner within two hours after the completion of the game. If it is proved that the winning coach knowingly or unknowingly violated the required defensive play rules, the game will be forfeited.

## Pitching

- 1) The pitcher must be in position inside the pitcher's area, and stationary, when the ball is placed in the machine. He may not move after the batter has stepped into the batter's box, and cannot move until the ball is hit.
- 2) The pitcher can play on either side of the machine, but must be inside the 10-foot pitcher's box.
- 3) There is a 30' safety arc from the back tip of home plate and from the first base line to the third base line.
- 4) The front of the pitching machine is set at 46 feet in a straight line directly toward second base.

## Calling Time After A Play

- 1) Umpires call time after every play and declare the ball dead. Time should be called as soon as the following has occurred:
  - i. The ball is held up while in the possession of an infielder, in the infield, or an overthrow to 1<sup>st</sup> base (see \*Base Running #5).
  - ii. No defensive play is imminent.

When advancing to the next base/attempting to score, a runner must be at least half way to the base, or home before "time is called". If not half way to base or home, the runner will go back to the previous base at the end of the play.

- 2) If a player gets injured, the ball is dead when the play ends.

## Mercy Rule

- 1) Innings 1 through 5 will have a 5 run limit. **There is no run limit in the 6<sup>th</sup> inning and beyond, or if the last inning due to time is inning 1-5.**
- 2) A team winning by 10 or more runs after 4 innings (3.5 innings if the home team is winning) or 8 or more runs after 5 innings, will be declared the winner.

## League Championship Standings

Points will be added up by team, and the team with the most points wins the regular season championship. The following scenario will determine league championship standings:

- 2 points for a win
- 1 point for a tie

- 0 points for a loss

In case of a tie, the tie breakers are:

- 1st tie breaker is head-to-head record
- 2nd tiebreaker is the least runs given up in head-to-head games
- 3rd tiebreaker will be a coin toss by the Machine Pitch Director; if the Machine Pitch Director is involved in the tie, then the coin toss will be done by the Baseball Commissioner.

### **End of Season Tournament**

For Tournament play only: There will be no time limit on all games. If the game is tied upon time expiration, then a completely new inning will be played; no game will end in a tie. No substitute players are allowed, from Park Sharon Coach Pitch or any other team, and there will be a 10-run rule after 4 and 8-run rule after 5 innings.

Teams will be seeded for the tournament based on their regular season standings. The team with the higher seed is always the home team during EOS tournament play.

### **Rules**

- 1) Any rule not covered in the PSAA League Rules revert to Cal Ripken Baseball rules and then to Major League Baseball rules.
- 2) The failure to comply with the Rules will result in a forfeited game.
- 3) All the rules stated in this document will apply to regular season and the Park Sharon EOS tournament.

### **Miscellaneous Rules**

Any breach of the PSAA Code of Conduct or the PSAA Coach's Code of Ethics will be reviewed by the Baseball Commissioners. Repeated violations will result in the player or coach becoming ineligible to play in Rec, Select and/or All Star competition.