



## EYO Machine Pitch League Rules

### **Age**

All children ages 7 to 9 may play Rookie League baseball. Baseball age is established as of May 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **Purpose**

To provide a safe, fun, competitive environment for kids to learn about and enjoy the game of baseball. Hitting, fielding, and running the bases are the primary coaching objectives of this league

### **Field Dimensions**

Bases set 60 feet apart; home to 2nd base 84 feet 10 inches. The front of the pitching machine is placed at 40-46' from the back of the plate.

### **Umpires**

Coaches will umpire for regular season games. Umpires will be provided for all post-season games. The umpire's decision(s) is (are) final.

For non-playoff games, umpiring will be done by the coach/parent operating the pitching machine (team at bat). The umpire may request assistance from the base coaches.

ONLY COACHES SHOULD HAVE COMMUNICATION - RELATED TO THE GAME AND ON FIELD ACTIVITIES - WITH THE UMPIRES. PLEASE ADVISE YOUR PARENTS AND PLAYERS NOT TO GET INTO DISCUSSIONS ABOUT CALLS ON THE FIELD WITH THE UMPIRE.

### **Balls**

Little League or Cal Ripken cushioned cork center balls will be used for game play.

### **Bats**

The bat may not exceed 33" in length, and the bat barrel may not exceed 2¼" in diameter. Only 2¼" barrel non-wood bats marked BPF 1.15, USSA, or USABat will be allowed. Wood 2 ¼" barrel bats are allowed.

### **Batting/Pitching**

Each player on the team will be placed in the batting order. It is recommended that the players be rotated through the batting order to ensure that all players receive an equal number of at-bats over the course of the season.

To accommodate field conditions, the pitching machine will be no closer than 40 feet and no further than 46 feet. The optimal distance for the pitching machine is 44 feet with a speed of 38 mph. The speed shall be set prior to the game.

Each at bat will consist of 5 pitches. If the 5<sup>th</sup> pitch is fouled off, the batter will be given subsequent pitch(es) until either the pitch is hit fair, it is swung on and missed, or a pitch not swung at.

There is no bunting allowed. Each batter must attempt to swing at the ball. If any batter squares to bunt at a ball, a dead ball will be called immediately. The pitch will count against the 5-pitch total, and if it is the 5<sup>th</sup> pitch, the batter is out.

The pitching machine operator may declare a **NO PITCH** if and only if there is a pitching machine

malfunctions. **Note:** This rule only applies if: the pitching machine runs out of gas during a pitch, power to the machine is severed, or if the ball sails off line for the first pitch of the inning (i.e. the machine legs were kicked during the on/off movement of the players between innings).

Coaches are strongly encouraged NOT to abuse this rule. If a batter swings at an absurdly un-hittable pitch, it shall still be declared a pitch. Changes to the pitching machine's speed or location can only be made prior to the start of the inning and will require consent of both coaches and the umpire. The exception to this rule is if a player, coach, or batted ball comes into contact with the machine causing a slight dislocation.

A batted ball striking the pitching machine will be declared a dead ball. The batter is awarded first base. Each runner will advance one base. A coach can and should do a test pitch prior to the next batter coming to bat after a ball hit the machine as this could affect the settings.

A batted ball, after being touched by a fielder, or a thrown ball that hits the pitching machine is a live ball. Play will continue as if the ball had not hit the machine.

A ball that has been batted, thrown, or touched, that lands underneath the pitching machine shall be declared a dead ball. If not already at first base, the batter will be awarded first base. All runners will be awarded a base based on their position when the dead ball was called (see Time Out Rule).

No stealing or leading off base is permitted. If a runner leaves the base prior to the ball being hit by the batter, the runner will be called out. There are no warnings for this infraction.

There is no infield fly rule.

There is no dropped third strike rule.

All batters and base runners must wear a helmet.

### ***Base Running***

On an overthrow, a runner can attempt to advance one additional base from the base he/she was going to at the time of the overthrow. Runners should be encouraged to take the additional base on an overthrow. This will teach them to turn towards the advanced base and for the fielder to pursue the overthrown ball. Coaches are discouraged from abusing this local rule.

(Example 1) Batter-runner runs to first on a batted ball to the infield. An overthrow at first base enables the batter-runner to attempt to reach second base. If the defensive team makes a subsequent overthrow, a dead ball shall be called and the runner will be stopped at second.

Example 2) With runners on first and second, a groundball is fielded by an infielder who throws the ball past the third baseman. The runners may attempt to advance as follows: runner on second may attempt to reach home, runner on first may attempt to reach third, and the batter-runner may attempt to reach second. Any subsequent overthrow or ball thrown out of bounds shall result in a dead ball, and no further advance of the runners is permitted.

Example 3) With a runner on second base, a batted ball is caught in the air by the second baseman. With the runner attempting to get back to second base to avoid being forced out, the second baseman attempts to throw the ball to the shortstop covering second base. The ball gets away from the shortstop. The runner (as long as the tag-up has been completed correctly) may attempt to advance to

third base. A subsequent overthrow to third base **will not** allow the runner to attempt to advance to home.

A ball that is put out of play by a fielder will result in an award of the base a runner was going to, plus one base. The overthrow rule takes precedence over a ball out of play.

**Time Out Rule:** If an infielder with possession and control of the ball, brings the ball within the base path and calls time out, time out will be granted by the umpire, and all runners that have reached at least the halfway point between two bases will be awarded the base to which they were going. If timeout is called immediately after a batted ball is fielded by an infielder, the batter receives first base, and runners that were more than halfway to a base are awarded that base, unless forced to advance as a result of the batter occupying first base.

### ***Scoring/Standings***

An inning is over when 5 runs have been scored in the inning, or 3 outs have been made. There is a 5-run rule for each inning, with no continuation. If the 5<sup>th</sup> run scores during an at bat, the play will continue until an out is made or all the runners cross home plate (including the batter-runner). Any runs scored over the 5-run limit will not count.

There is unlimited batting/scoring in the last inning. In the case of an abbreviated game due to darkness, coaches and the umpire should predetermine the last inning prior to its beginning.

### ***Fielding/Defense***

It is highly recommended that all players wear a protective cup. Catchers must wear a protective cup.

There will be a maximum of 11 players on defense. There can be as many as: 4 outfielders, 4 infielders, 2 pitchers, and 1 catcher.

There is no player-pitching at this level. The pitching position is for defensive purposes only. Defensive pitchers must be placed parallel with the pitching machine, no more than 8 feet out to either side. Pitchers must not move in front of the machine until after the ball has been hit.

Teams may not field a 2<sup>nd</sup> pitcher or a 4<sup>th</sup> outfielder until all 9 'regular' baseball positions have been filled. The 10<sup>th</sup> player may be used as either the extra pitcher or extra outfielder.

If a team has only 8 players available, the team may elect to play without a catcher. Outfielders must be placed at least 30 feet beyond any base (this is typically deep enough to keep the players beyond the dirt infield).

No batter-runner may be put out at first by an outfielder on a ball that has been hit to the outfield, unless that batter-runner has made an attempt to go to second base.

On a ball hit to the outfield, a runner may not be forced out at second or third on an unassisted play by an outfielder.

Each player may only sit out 1 inning per game. No player may play more than 3 innings at any one position in a game. All players need to play at least 2 innings in the infield (1st, 2nd, 3rd, shortstop, or pitcher). Sitting out a player more than 1 inning will result in a forfeit, unless the player is injured or has left the field. \*\*It is strongly recommended that players stay at one position for no more than 2

innings. This will help develop a broader set of skills.

If you need to switch a player defensive position during an inning, that is allowed. However only full innings count toward the above minimum playing times.

If there is a special case that would justify giving a player less time on defense that must be approved by the league coordinator.

### ***Game Duration***

There will be a maximum of 6 innings per game. The team with the most runs at the end of the game will be the winner. All regular season games that end in a tie score at the end of six innings or official games that are ended prematurely due to inclement weather with the score tied shall be reported as a tie game. In the playoffs, International Tie Breaker Rules will apply

International Tie Breaker Rules: The batter that precedes the leadoff batter in extra innings shall be placed on second base with no outs. The game will proceed as normal from that point. This will repeat each inning until there is a winner.

No inning shall start after 1 hour and 40 minutes past the scheduled start time of a game. No play may be continued after 1 hour and 50 minutes past the scheduled start time of the game. If a game has to be stopped between innings due to time limits, the score will revert back to the last full inning played.

A game is considered an official game if at least 4 full innings have been played with the home team trailing, or 3 ½ innings with the home team winning. If a game in progress is called due to inclement weather or nightfall and is not an official game as described above, the game must be rescheduled and played from the beginning (including playoff games).

During the playoffs, a full 6-inning game will be played, even if the game is suspended due to weather or darkness.

Game results are to be reported to the League Coordinator by the winning team. It is the responsibility of the League Coordinator to enter the results on the EYO baseball website.

Scorebooks **MUST** be maintained to allow player eligibility in any Cal Ripken tournament. Scorebooks should contain FULL NAME and UNIFORM NUMBER for each player.

Every effort will be made to ensure post-season games will begin at such a time so that the championship game will be completed not later than the *scheduled end of school*.

End of season standings will determine post-seasons seeding. Tie breakers will be established as follows:

- 1) head-to-head games played
- 2) won/loss record within division
- 3) total runs given up
- 4) total run differential
- 5) coin flip