

MASON DISTRICT LITTLE LEAGUE “A” DIVISION PLAYING RULES

PHILOSOPHY: To teach the players the fundamentals of baseball in a positive and safe environment; but foremost, to allow the children to have fun and enjoy the game of baseball.

1. Coaches and players should be considerate of their opponents. Don't emphasize the score. Be reasonable with base running. Teach the children how to run the bases without being unfairly aggressive. Base coaches should be adults who understand the rules. After the games, the teams should meet and shake hands.
2. Spectators, managers, coaches and players are expected to practice good sportsmanship at all times. The chattering of encouragement is permitted. Trying to confuse the opposing team by yelling "strike, swing, hey batter, etc." or any other harassment is not permitted. Managers are responsible for the conduct of the spectators supporting their team.
3. A Division games shall be played in accordance with the official rules of Little League Baseball except that at the start of the season a coach, from the pitching rubber, will pitch to the batters.
4. By mid-season a pitching machine, provided by the league, shall be used to deliver the ball from the mound to the batter. The pitching machine shall be adjusted to the satisfaction of both managers before the game begins. The speed of the pitch should be set at 38 mph to start the season, and it is the goal of the Division to gradually raise it to 43 mph by the end of the season.
5. The pitching machine shall be operated by coaches or other adult volunteers as agreed by the teams at the start of the game. The machine operator shall not impede or interfere with the fielders. Teams may position up to two coaches from the defensive team on the field. Base runners should be coached by the base coaches.
6. Whenever the pitching machine needs adjustment the machine operator shall call time and readjust the machine.
7. If a batted ball hits the machine, it shall be a dead ball and the batter shall be credited with a single. All base runners shall advance one base.
8. If a thrown ball hits the pitching machine and/or the operator and bounces away or becomes lodged in the machine, the ball is dead and base runners shall advance to the bases to which they were advancing at the time of the interference, but no additional bases will be awarded.
9. The defensive team shall station a player (pitcher) in a safe position to either side (but not in front) of the pitching machine and within 6 feet of the perimeter of the mound itself. This player will make all defensive plays ordinarily made by the pitcher. The pitcher may not leave this area until the ball reaches the batter.
10. The catcher will be required to wear all of the protective equipment and will take the normal catchers position on the field behind home plate. Managers should use discretion to be sure only players who are able to play the position safely are allowed as catchers.
11. Fielders and the catcher shall return balls to the pitcher who in turn will hand the ball to the machine operator.

12. Base runners will only be allowed to advance, at their risk, one base on any overthrow to a base when the ball remains in fair territory.

13. No batter will be awarded first base because of being hit by a pitched ball. There will be NO WALKS however, with the accumulation of three swinging strikes, the batter will be declared out. There are NO "CALLED STRIKES". Each batter will either hit or strike out, with the coaches using their discretion to call out on strikes any player who is making an insufficient attempt to swing at strikes.

14. There will be NO STOLEN BASES, even on wild pitches or passed balls.

15. A team keeps batting each half inning until such time that 3 outs are recorded or 5 runs are scored. The "10-run" rule (4.10e) does not apply for Mason District Little League games.

16. **PLAYER PARTICIPATION RULE.** All eligible players will be included in the batting lineup and should be listed in the scorebook. It is encouraged that each team keep a scorebook and exchange lineups. All players will bat whether or not they are playing in the field. This batting order will remain constant throughout the game. Players arriving after the game has begun will be placed at the bottom of the batting order.

17. Each team member must play at least every other inning in the field defensively. Coaches are expected to rotate each player into all the different positions the player is comfortable playing during a game and throughout the season. Each team must field a different player at pitcher during each inning of a game.

18. All players are required to wear long pants. Only sneakers or regulation baseball shoes with rubber cleats are to be worn. Bare feet, sandals, or the wearing of heavy shoes is prohibited.

19. Games will be a maximum of 6 innings. Games will be considered completed when at least 3 innings have been completed and the game is called because of time limit, darkness, or rain.

20. Provided that an official game has been played, no new inning will start 1 hour 15 minutes after the actual start of the game.

21. If a team fails to have 10 players at game time, they may play with a minimum of 7, or borrow players from the other team for that game. (It is important that we do everything possible to get the games played as scheduled.) Only 6 players will be allowed in the infield positions (i.e. pitcher, catcher, 1st base, 2nd base, short-stop, and 3rd base.) The other players, up to a maximum of four, must be outfielders.

22. Due to a shortage of volunteer umpires, it is the manager's responsibility to either umpire themselves or before the game have each team provide one "umpire." There will be no called balls or strikes.

23. Pre-Game/Post-Game Responsibilities and Warm-up Rules.

- The Home team is responsible for raking the field prior to each game. The Visiting team is responsible for taking down the field after the game. That includes filling in holes in infield and batter's box and locking up tools and equipment in the storage shed. Bases should be left on the field.
- The Home team may use the field for warm-ups from 25 minutes to 15 minutes before game-time. Important Note: If the field is not ready prior to 25 minutes before game time, the additional field preparation time will be sacrificed from the Home team warm-up time. The Visiting team has the field 15 minutes until 5 minutes before game-time. At 5 minutes prior to game-time, both teams will return to their dugouts, managers will meet for a pre-game conference, and the "official" start time will be established.
- Both teams are responsible for picking up trash in the dugouts, stands, and field after the game. Remind players and parents that keeping our parks clean is everybody's responsibility.