

## 2014 MDLL BATTING CAGE OPERATING RULES

### RESERVATIONS

- The MDLL Batting Cage is for use by authorized members of MDLL. Batting Cage is for players in the Juniors, Softball, Majors, AAA, and AA Divisions.
- Batting Cage slots are in 1-hour increments. Reservations are for all three cages. Weekday slots are at 4, 5, 6 and 7 p.m., Saturday slots are at 9, 10, 11, noon, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6; and 7 p.m. Sunday slots are at 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 p.m.
- A rolling 3-week cycle (Current Week, Week +1, and Week +2) is used to reserve slots. On Thursdays, Week +1 becomes the Current Week and Week +2 becomes Week +1. Reservations can be made for any open slots in these two weeks, but teams cannot reserve more than two slots per week (Sunday through Saturday). For the new Week +2, teams may request 1 slot (and 1 alternate) for this week. Said another way, on Thursdays, team may request any open slots in the first two week periods, but no more than 2 slots per week. Teams may also request 1 slot (and 1 alternate) in the third week of the 3-week cycle.
- Reservations are made to and confirmed by the designated MDLL Point of Contact.

### SETTING UP

- If you are the first cage user, it will take you 5-10 minutes to unlock the three doors, equipment space door, lift the generator, add gasoline, uncoil the extension cords, start the generator, and power the pitching machines. Hang the padlocks on the fence mesh, so that they do not disappear on you. The pitching machines should be turned off and controls turned to zero, before you plug them in to prevent damage. **NOTE:** Be sure to keep two sets of dimpled, polyurethane batting balls separated. The pitching machines will not throw consistent pitches when the two sets are mixed.
- Place gas in the generator before attempting to start. Empty gasoline containers are available for refill, but do not leave gas in them. It takes less than 1/2 gallon of gas for about 1 hour of operation. Be sure to adjust the choke and open the fuel line before starting. If it is warm, no choke is needed to start the generator. Even on a cool day, half choke for 30 seconds is all that is required.

### OPERATING RULES

- Safety rules are posted on the front of the cages. Please read and follow them closely. Only one player should be in a cage at a time, and wearing a batting helmet. Under no circumstances should anyone other than an adult operate the machines. Serious injury could occur if a someone gets their hand caught in the wheels of the pitching machines, or gets hit with a bat or batted ball.
- The outer two cages have pitching machines. One outer cage also has a pitching mound if live pitching is desired. The center cage can be used for soft toss and batting tee practice. Recommended cycle is to have players first do soft toss swings and/or batting tee before batting from pitching machines. Soft toss batting using baseballs should be done only against the green mat. Tennis balls can be used for batting against the net for either soft toss or batting tee.
- Please be considerate of all our teams and kids and leave the equipment provided for all to use. Please contribute your older baseballs to ensure we have enough soft toss baseballs. Baseballs should not be purposefully hit against the nets in either soft toss or with batting tee. This will damage the nets by being smashed against the metal fence. It's okay to use

the tennis balls to hit against the net or the fence. The yellow balls for the two big machines. The lightweight, white balls for the Hitting Streak machines. Using the yellow balls in the Hitting Streaks will damage them, and putting the white balls in the large, pitching machines will destroy the balls.

- Finally, please be careful with snagged netting. It is quite common to have the net snagged on the edges of the chain link. These should be carefully un-snagged so we don't make tears and holes in the netting. New nets will cost \$600-\$800 each to replace.

### **CLOSING DOWN AND LOCK UP**

- If you are the last user, it will take you 10-15 minutes to secure all the equipment. Be sure to turn off the generator fuel cutoff valve and choke at shutdown. The pitching machines should be turned off and controls turned to zero. Unplug the extension cords and place them back in the green storage container,
- Replace covers on the pitching machines and tightly secure the covers with the bungee cords.
- Please rake and pack down the cages, particularly around the batters box after you're done.
- Be sure to turn the fuel cock horizontal (off) and let the generator cool until everything else is put away. Turn the pitching machines to zero and then off, unplug the extension cords, and recoil them. Replace all covers securely on the machines that remain outside. All other machines, electrical cords, baseballs, practice balls, hitting helmets, etc., should be placed back in the yellow storage container. Please do not remove balls, hats or any of the equipment dedicated to the cages without prior permission.
- Finally, and most important, secure the front doors as tightly as you can. Put the lock through the metal clasp and stretch the cord through the fence far enough away so that it is fairly tight. Then check the door and see if someone could still squeeze through.

### **SUMMARY**

1. Operation is strictly bring your own gas. If you don't know how to operate the equipment, have someone who has done it before show you how the first time. This is important.
2. It is best to have the help of 2-3 coaches/parents help in order to have your entire team cycle through all stations at the batting cage in one hour.
3. Stress safety inside and around the cages. All players in the cage must wear helmets.
4. Clean up after you are done. Put things away and cover the pitching machines. Fill in holes caused by batters. Pick up any trash in and around the cages.
5. Be sure to securely lock the cages when you leave.