



Updated 04/20/24

## **ARTICLE ELEVEN.**

### **SPECIFIC RULES OF PLAY FOR MINOR LEAGUE**

**A.** The focus at this level should be on sportsmanship, team play and knowledge of the game. Team standings will be kept and a tournament will be played at the end of the regular season.

**B.** A pitching machine will be used as the pitcher when practical for Minor League games.

**C.** A maximum of 5 runs may be scored in one inning. Six innings are played.

**D.** Base runners cannot lead off and shall not leave the base until the ball has been hit. When the ball is in play, a base runner can advance at his/her own risk.

**E.** Bunting is not permitted. If a bunt is attempted, a strike will be called and the player will be reminded that bunting is not allowed.

**F.** The infield fly rule will not be invoked.

**G.** Every team player will be assigned a position in the batting order and will bat in that position during the entire game and will also play defensively for the entire game.

#### **H. Pitching Machine Rules:**

The dirt part of the pitcher's mound two feet in from the grass edge starting and ending at the center of the pitching machine will be in play. The area in front of center and the rest of the mound shall be designated as the "free hit zone". Any ball that lands in this area is dead, and the hitter is awarded first base. Any batted ball that comes in contact with the machine or the adult operator is also dead and the hitter is awarded first base. In the case of a dead ball or a ball hitting the pitching machine, runners will advance **only** if necessary to accommodate the batter being awarded first base. Players are not allowed to field the ball inside this area. A ball that passes through the free hit zone without contacting the pitching machine, pitching machine operator or any player will be in play. One player is placed outside the pitcher's mound assuming the defensive position of the pitcher. This player must have at least one foot on the edge of the pitcher's mound and be behind a line extending from the pitcher's rubber to the edge of the circle. The pitcher must be positioned on the first base side of the mound in the case of a right handed batter and on the third base side of the mound in the case of a left handed batter. Pitcher position must wear a helmet.

**1.** A coach, assistant coach or adult volunteer must feed the pitching machine.

**2.** Each player gets five hittable pitches to put the ball into play. If the batter has not succeeded after five pitches the batter is out. There are no walks yet a player can strike out after three swinging strikes. The batter is not out on an uncaught foul ball. There is no limit to the number of foul balls after there are two strikes on a batter. Any pitch which, in the umpire's opinion, is unhittable and, at which the batter does not swing, shall be declared a "no-pitch", and not counted against the five pitch limit. Any pitch which, in the

umpire's opinion, is un-hittable and, at which the batter does swing, shall be declared "A PITCH".

3. Any thrown ball which hits anything in the circle (i.e. the machine, operator, pitching rubber, etc.) is a dead ball and all base runners advance to the base to which they are headed.

I. A decision not to use the pitching machine or discontinue using the pitching machine or postpone a game during or prior to the commencement of the game due to unplayable conditions is up to the coaches. The agreement of both coaches is required for play to continue with or without the pitching machine.

J. If the pitching machine cannot be used, a coach or an assistant coach will pitch to his/her own players.

1. The "coach-pitcher" may be positioned at the pitching rubber or up to 10 feet in front of the rubber. The "coach-pitcher" must pitch overhand. The "coach-pitcher" must not coach the runners. When the ball is put into play, the "coach-pitcher" should move to an area which will best remove the "coach-pitcher" from potential interference with the play of the defensive team.

2. If the "coach-pitcher" is hit by a batted ball, a "no-pitch" will be declared. The batter will return to the batter's box, and all base runners will return to the base held at the time of the pitch.

3. If the batter is hit by a pitched ball, the batter is not awarded first base. The pitch does count as one of the batters ten pitches.

4. There will be no called balls or strikes and no walks. The batter will be out if he/she swings and misses on a 3rd strike, or if he/she fails to hit a ball into the field of play within 10 pitches. The umpire shall keep track of swinging strikes and the number of pitches and shall declare when the batter has one remaining pitch.

K. When a "coach-pitcher" is used, the team in the field will position a player within 5 feet of the pitching rubber to field the pitcher's position. This player must be positioned on the first base side of the mound in the case of a right handed batter and on the third base side of the mound in the case of a left handed batter. Each team will use a catcher and four infielders. The remaining players on the roster will be used in the outfield. Outfielders must be positioned at least 15 feet into the outfield grass.

1. The outfield is to have a painted dashed line 15' from the start of the outfield grass, when available. All outfielders are to stand BEHIND the 15' markings until the batted ball is put in play

2. An outfielder is NOT permitted to make an unassisted force out in the infield.

3. An outfielder is NOT permitted to assume the position of an infielder during a live play and catch a ball as part of a force out or tag out at any base.

**4.** An outfielder is **ONLY** permitted to assist on force outs by throwing the ball to an infielder at a base for the out.

**L.** The play is dead when the ball is under the control of an infield player in the infield. A baserunner who is more than halfway to the base to which he/she is advancing will be awarded that base. Otherwise the baserunner shall return to the prior base. Per baseball rules, timeouts must be awarded only by the umpire. No timeouts are assumed as soon as the ball is in play.

**M.** Coaches, Assistant Coaches or Adult Volunteers may assume the duty as base coaches. In this capacity, they may only provide instruction to their base runners and shall in no way obstruct the playing of the game. The base runner will be out if touched by the base coach.

**N.** Should the absence of regular team players result in fewer players being present than allowed on the field of play, an official player from the next lower league may be added to the official roster for that game. The temporary player can come from any team from the next lower league unless the Board of Directors has established a supplemental structure to specify the call up linkage between leagues. The temporary player is subject to the following restrictions:

1. The temporary player must be assigned to the last position in the batting order.
2. If the temporary player is the 11th available player, he/she will occupy the 11th spot in the batting order and must play defensively for a minimum of six outs. A temporary player who is the 11th available player is not subject to the minimum infield/outfield rules. In no event shall any team field more than 11 players through the use of call ups. If a regular player is injured or otherwise unable to continue to play, the temporary player may then participate without restriction.
3. The temporary player, if used, must play defensively for six outs.

**O.** Each player must play at least 3 innings in the infield and 2 innings in the outfield each game. This rule may be waived by the coach or by the parent or guardian of a specific player only with League Director's approval. Approval must be granted prior to the start of the season. Any such waiver should be an exception occurrence only and only occur if it is clear that the player will be safer playing only in the outfield.

**P.       Doubles Rule:**

1. Any batted ball that first hits the ground on the infield dirt or infield grass shall be deemed a "single", if the batter reaches first base safely. The batter and all baserunners are permitted to advance a maximum of one (1) base as a result of that batted ball. Each runner advances each base at the risk of being out as a result of a defensive play. In the event of a defensive error or an overthrow, the runners are not permitted to advance.
2. Any batted ball that **FIRST** hits the ground on the **OUTFIELD** grass **AND** goes **BEYOND** the 15 foot markings, by either rolling on the ground or flies past the 15' line completely in the air, shall be deemed a play that the batter may attempt to obtain a "double". The batter and all baserunners are permitted to advance a

maximum of two (2) bases and are at risk of being out as the result of a defensive play. In the event of an error committed by an Outfielder, or an overthrow, the runners are not permitted to advance.

**3.**The umpire has the final say as to the ruling on where a batted ball first hits the ground.