

# **9U House League Provincial Tournament (Pilot)**

## **Playing Rules**

### **1 Official Rules**

- 1.1 The rules for all scheduled games within the Baseball Ontario (OBA) 9U House League Provincial Tournament (Pilot) shall be the “Official Rules of Baseball”, except as detailed in this document or the accompanying 9U House League Provincial Tournament (Pilot) Rules and Regulations.
- 1.2 OBA 9U House League Provincial Tournament (Pilot) rules cannot be changed or amended without approval of the OBA Select Council.
- 1.3 All participants including coaches, players, officials, parents, and spectators must always adhere to the appropriate Code of Conduct and promote positive aspects of the sport. Coaches must consistently display high standards of behaviour and be a positive role model. Negative communication and interactions between participants will not be tolerated.

### **2 Diamond Layout & Pitching Machine**

- 2.1 Bases will be at a distance of 65 ft. The fair / foul begins and ends at the back corner of home plate.
- 2.2 An 8 ft. diameter safety circle shall be marked off around the pitching machine. (If COVID-19 protocols are still in place, the safety circle shall be 12 ft. diameter.) Lines shall be drawn from the release point to 4 ft. beyond the circle.
- 2.3 The release point of the pitching machine is to be centered inside the safety circle 44 ft. from home plate.
- 2.4 The pitching machine speed will be set between 40 mph and may not be altered except at the end of a full inning. Any tampering with the machine speed by the operating coach shall result in an immediate warning by the umpire. If the machine speed is erratic, it may be corrected by the umpire at any time.
- 2.5 The height of the pitching machine can be adjusted by the operating coach at the end of an inning. The coach operating the pitching machine:
  - i. may instruct the batter before feeding the machine but must not interfere with any play. Penalty: the batter will be called out and the runners will be returned to their original bases. In the case of a third out, the side will be retired.
  - ii. shall not instruct runners during the play. Penalty: the operating coach shall be warned by the umpire. If the action continues, the individual will be removed from that position.
- 2.6 Ball passing through the safety circle:
  - i. If a batted ball hits the machine, pitching coach, or any apparatus within the pitching circle, the ball is dead, the batter is awarded first base and all other runners will advance only if forced.
  - ii. If a thrown ball hits the pitching machine, pitching coach, or any apparatus within the pitching circle, the ball is dead and bases will be awarded according dead ball overthrow rules.
  - iii. At 9U, if a player enters the safety circle to retrieve a batted ball, the ball is dead and the batter runner is awarded first base, all other runners will advance only if forced.
  - iv. If a player enters the safety circle to retrieve a thrown ball, the ball is dead and overthrow base awards will apply.

### **3 Positions**

- 3.1 A minimum of 9 players must be on the field during each defensive inning, and the maximum number of players allowed on the field is 11. Positions are as follows: the 9 traditional positions plus an extra outfielder. If a coach elects to have 11 players on the field, the team may either have an extra pitcher or another extra outfielder. The coach must exercise the same choice for the entire game, unless the number of available players falls below 11 due to injury.
- 3.2 Pitchers must stand beside the pitching machine, outside of the safety circle and behind the release point of the pitching machine. The pitcher must have both feet behind the line, but not more than 4 ft. behind the line, until the ball is released from the machine. Once the ball is released from the machine, the pitcher may move in front of the line but may not move through the safety circle.
- 3.3 The 'infield' is considered to be the 65 ft. square made by the bases. The pitcher, catcher and players at 1st base, 2nd base, 3rd base and shortstop are considered 'infielders'.
- 3.4 Until the ball is released, outfielders must position themselves at least 15 feet beyond the basepaths or on the outfield grass, whichever is closer.

### **4 Game Play**

- 4.1 Each batter will receive 5 "hittable" pitches. If the batter does not hit a fair ball within 5 pitches, they will be declared out. If the 5th or subsequent pitch is a foul ball that is not caught, the batter is not out and shall continue receiving pitches. If the 5th or subsequent pitch is a foul ball that is caught before hitting the ground, the batter will be declared out.
- 4.2 The umpire shall call 'Play' to make the ball live. If the pitching machine operator feeds and releases a ball from the machine before the umpire calls 'Play', the ball will be declared 'no pitch'.
- 4.3 A pitch that is over the batter's head or bounces in the dirt will be ruled 'no pitch' unless the batter swings at the pitch.
- 4.4 Only a pitcher may return a ball to the pitching machine coach with runners on base.
- 4.5 Batters cannot obtain a base on balls.
- 4.6 Bunting is not allowed and will result in an automatic out.
- 4.7 There will be no lead offs, stealing, wild pitches, passed balls or infield fly rule. Runners must remain on the base until the ball is hit. Penalty: first offence for each team a warning will be given, and runner will return to the base. After first offence runner will be called out.
- 4.8 Batters at 9U must drop the bat and not throw it (intentionally or unintentionally) upon hitting the ball. Penalty: each team shall be entitled to one warning per game. After the warning any further offences shall result in the batter being declared out, the ball being dead and runners returning to their bases. If, prior to the team's warning, a batter throws the bat resulting in an injury, the ball is dead, the play is halted and the team will receive its warning. The batter will continue. However, if this is the batter's 5th pitch, he will be considered to have batted the ball illegally and will be out.
- 4.9 To stop defensive play, any infielder who has control of the ball and is standing in the understood boundaries of the infield, can ask for time to be called. Time will be granted at the umpire's discretion and may not be granted if a baseball play is underway. Note: the ball does not need to be returned to the pitcher before an infielder possessing the ball may ask for time.
- 4.10 Base runners may only advance one base on the initial overthrow to any base. They may not advance a second base if the initial overthrow is followed by a subsequent overthrow.
- 4.11 Runners may not advance on an overthrow from the catcher or an infielder back to the pitcher.
- 4.12 No player shall maliciously run into another player. A fielder, including the catcher, cannot block the pathway of a runner. Runners are instructed to slide or attempt to avoid making contact with a fielder that might be in their way. Face-first sliding is not permitted.
- 4.13 An inning will end when three outs are made or a maximum of 7 runs have been scored. On a play

where the last run is scored, all awarded runs will be counted beyond the 7-run threshold only for dead ball awards such as overthrows out of play, or home runs over the fence.

4.14 A courtesy runner may not be used for the catcher.