

# Rookie In-Park Rules

## Section I - League and Objective

This league shall be known as the Rookie League, established for the purpose of providing maximum enjoyment for the child in playing the game of baseball and providing instruction in the fundamental skills of hitting, catching and throwing a baseball. It is also desirable that the child be taught the Social values of good sportsmanship, team play and basic interaction with others of the same age and interests.

## Section II - General Playing Rules

1. In addition to the Minor League book of rules of Little League rules and regulations and Milford Little League in-park ground rules, the following specialized rules will govern play for this league. In the event of a conflict between these specialized rules and the Minor League rulebook or the Milford Little League in-park ground rules, these specialized rules must prevail.

## Section III - Playing Field

- Bases are 60 feet apart and the pitcher's rubber is 46 feet from home plate.
- There will be a 15 foot marked off area at the pitcher's rubber where the pitcher may not enter until the batter hits the ball.
- There will be a 30-foot halfway line marked off between all bases except home plate and first base.

## Section IV - Participation

1. Each team will consist of the number of players determined by the board of directors prior to the beginning of the season.
2. The teams will be made up of players that are league age 7 and 8.
3. The roster will be determined by draft. Managers will judge talent based on a tryout prior to the draft.

*Note: All players will be drafted by a team and the draft order will not be made known outside of the draft room.*

4. Each team will be allowed one Manager, two (2) coaches, a safety officer, scorekeeper and team parent.
5. Each team's batting line up will consist of all players on its roster. A player will bat even if not currently playing on defense.
6. Each player on a team must play a minimum of two innings on defense per game.
7. Any player who does not start in one game must start in the next game.

*Note: Any player who is not present fifteen (15) minutes prior to the scheduled start of a game may be removed from the starting lineup.*

8. Violation of any participation rule will result in disciplinary action by the Board of Directors.
9. No new inning may begin more than ninety (90) minutes after the official start of the game. Any inning started will be completed.
10. When a player arrives after a game has started, he will be eligible to enter the game the beginning of the next ½ inning. (If the late player is the 9th player he/she may enter upon arrival)
11. A minimum of eight players is required to play a game.

### **Section V - Pitching**

1. In order to provide a more consistent pattern of hittable pitches for the batter the use of a pitching machine will be employed. The Safety Officer will present the ball to the batter and place the ball into the pitching machine. The size and type will be determined by the board of directors prior to the start of the playing season.
2. The machine will be placed a distance of forty-six (46) feet from home plate. The pitch will be delivered at a speed of forty (40) mph.
3. Each team will be allowed three (3) pitches with which to adjust the machine, when their team comes to bat in each inning. There will be no adjustment of the machine for individual batters. The Umpire may declare the machine out of adjustment at any time he believes it to be and order it to be adjusted.
4. Each batter will receive a total of five (5) pitches or three (3) strikes. If the batter has not hit the ball or swung at three pitches by the fifth (5th) pitch he/she will be declared out. If the batter swings and fouls the fifth (5th) pitch he/she will be given another pitch and will continue to receive additional pitches as long as he/she continues to foul the last pitch. If in the Umpires judgment the pitching machine delivers a wild pitch the batter will receive another pitch, unless the wild pitch is hit by the batter.
5. No base on balls or hit batsman that permits a batter to take first base will be allowed.
6. In the event that a batted ball strikes the pitching machine or the electrical cord or the Safety officer, the ball is dead, no runners may advance and no play may be made on the runner. The batter will be awarded first base and runners will advance only if forced.
7. In the event that a thrown ball strikes the pitching machine, the electrical cord or the Safety Officer, the ball is still in play. If in the view of the umpire a child trying to field the ball would be in danger of running into the pitching machine, the umpire will call "Dead Ball".

## **Section VI - Offense**

1. Batters will not be allowed to bunt or swing easy at the ball. If in the Umpire's judgment a batter attempts to bunt, the batter will be charged with a foul ball. A batter attempting to bunt on the fifth (5th) pitch will be declared out.
2. Runners will not be allowed to play off the base or steal. Runners will not leave the base until the pitched ball is hit by the batter.
3. Batters who sling their bat will cause a warning to be issued to the batter. The next time the batter slings his/her bat he/she will be declared out, the ball is dead, no runners may advance and no play may be made on a runner.

*Note: This may be in the same at bat.*

4. A runner is encouraged to slide into second base, third base and home plate when a play is being made on him/her by a fielder. If the fielder or catcher leaves the base or home plate to make a play on the base runner sliding is not necessary. The purpose of this rule is to reduce the number of collisions. Under no circumstances will deliberate collisions be tolerated. If in the judgment of the umpire a collision was determined to be deliberate the runner will be declared out. Any runner sliding head first is automatically out.
5. An adult coach will be allowed in the coach's boxes at first and third bases. The Manager and coaches must ask for and receive time out before leaving the dugout or the coaches box.
6. The adult pitcher (safety officer) cannot converse or instruct his/her own players. He/she can warn a child to move out of the way of a bad pitch. If in the opinion of the umpire, the adult pitcher interferes with a play, judgment will be made in favor of the defensive team.

*Note: It is okay to have a base coach instructing their batter on how to bat when the team is on offense.*

7. The adult pitcher must always attempt to remain out of the way after a ball is hit. He/she should remain in the pitchers circle to protect a player from running into the pitching machine, but if possible should kneel down until the umpire calls dead ball.
8. The infield fly rule will not apply in this league.
9. The first five (5) innings will be limited to four (4) runs or three (3) outs. The sixth (6th) inning will be limited to three (3) outs with no limit on runs.

## **Section VII - Defense**

1. Each team will field nine (9) players in the usual defensive positions.(exception: unless a team has only 8) The pitcher must have one foot in the circle and one foot out of the circle. There will be no restriction as to which side of the pitching machine

the pitcher must stand on. The pitcher will stand with his/her feet behind a line from first to third base.

2. The catcher will take his/her normal position behind home plate and catch the pitched ball from the pitching machine and return it to his/her player pitcher or the adult safety officer.
3. There will be no adults allowed on the field on defense.
4. To stop play the defense must stop the advancement of the lead runner and all trailing runners or throw the ball to the pitcher in the pitcher's circle (known as the dead ball zone). Once the pitcher has control of the ball, in the pitcher's circle, time will be called and play will be stopped.
5. Runners that are between bases, less than half way, when the umpire calls time out must be returned to the previous base if vacant. This is a judgment call by the umpire and cannot be questioned by the manager, coaches or spectators. If questioned, the manager, coach or spectator will be warned. On the second warning, the person will be removed from the game.

### **Section VIII - Umpires**

1. It is the responsibility of the managers and coaches to umpire. A schedule will be provided.
2. The home plate umpire will be in charge and will keep the official time. The official starting time will be recorded by the visiting team scorekeeper according to the umpire's watch. The home plate umpire will be a major or minor coach or manager, who will be fully trained on the Rookie rules by the Umpire in Chief prior to the opening of the season. The umpire will be responsible for keeping the game moving at a good pace to allow more play time and should call for batters when they are not ready or on deck.

### **Section IX - Manager/Coach Responsibilities and Conduct**

1. Managers and coaches may occupy the first and third base coaching boxes while their team is playing offense.
2. While occupying coaching boxes, a manager or coach may not call any base runner out or safe. One warning will be given, after which the offender will be removed from the field, but will be able to occupy the dugout.
3. Managers are responsible for the conduct of their scorekeeper to ensure that they do not interfere with calls by the umpire or confuse a player. Scorekeepers are not allowed to position or coach players from the scorekeeper perch, they are encouraged to cheer for their child and team.
4. Managers and coaches must request and be granted time out by an umpire before leaving the dugout or coaching boxes. If in the opinion of the umpire, excessive time-outs are called, the umpire has the right not to grant time-out.

5. Conduct rules covered in the Little League section also apply to the Farm league.

### **Section X - Miscellaneous Rules**

1. The visiting team scorekeeper will be the official scorekeeper.
2. The official scorekeeper must obtain the signature of the home plate umpire in the official score book upon game completion.
3. The home team is responsible for preparing the field, i.e. sitting out bases, chalking the field, setting up the pitching machine, etc. Visiting team puts bases and machine away.
4. Final league standings will consist of all teams. Ties will be broken based on regular season results between the teams. If the teams are still tied after this a coin flip will break the ties.
5. The post season tournament will include all teams. A playoff bracket will be provided once the total number of teams for the season is known. The tournament will be single elimination format. The top seeded team (team with the best record) will be the home team in all post season tournament games.
6. Each team is allowed a minimum of one, and a maximum of three, adults in their dugout. (This is an insurance regulation and will be strictly enforced.)