

2017 MACHINE PITCH BASEBALL & SOFTBALL RULES AND REGULATIONS

The Brandon Township Parks & Recreation Baseball & Softball League is **RECREATIONAL** in nature, not competitive. This program stresses respect and basic rules above all else. Wins, losses and scores are recorded for Machine Pitch. We recommend that coaches rotate players through all positions. This is the only opportunity to play league baseball or softball for many of our local youths, so praise each player regularly and sincerely. They will remember their baseball experience for the rest of their lives!

MUST-READ for ALL COACHES and PARENTS...

ALL UMPIRE RULINGS are considered final. Umpires reserve the right to evict anyone arguing or displaying unsportsmanlike behavior of any kinds. Anyone choosing to disregard the umpires' calls, anyone choosing to show disrespect or argue with the umpire, and anyone choosing to exhibit poor sportsmanship will be immediately excused for the duration of the game and possibly for the duration of the season. Such evictions are at the discretion of the umpire, site director and are enforceable regardless of the correctness (or incorrectness) of the call, judgment or rule interpretation by the umpire. We expect all coaches, parents and spectators to model respect and good sportsmanship under ALL CIRCUMSTANCES. Coaches should address parents or spectators exhibiting poor conduct. Umpires reserve the right to reprimand or evict any coach, parent or spectator exhibiting unsportsmanlike conduct or disrespectful behavior. Issues regarding rule interpretations, umpires, coaches, or parents should be directed to Brandon Township Parks & Recreation.

OFFICIAL HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL/SOFTBALL RULES SHALL GOVERN ALL LEAGUE PLAY, WITH THE FOLLOWING EXCEPTIONS AND RESTATEMENTS:

1. The home team will sit on the third base side of the field. The home team is listed first on the schedule.
2. The only persons permitted to sit on the bench are eligible players, coaches and team scorekeepers.
3. Each team should exchange batting orders and have the orders entered in the score books at least five minutes prior to scheduled game time.
4. Umpires must review ground rules with coaches from both teams before each game begins.
5. Batting teams may have one first and one third base coach in their respective coaching boxes.
6. Only one "on deck" player is permitted in the "on deck" circle. Coaches and Assistant Coaches may only instruct their own team members.
7. The home team scorekeeper will be the official game scorekeeper and is responsible for recording the score, the number of innings each pitcher pitched, if applicable, and the number of innings played by each fielder. Concurrence with the visiting team's scorekeeper should be made after each inning.
8. Weather cancellations are rescheduled by Brandon Township Recreation whenever possible. It is each coach's responsibility to check with the office for rescheduled game times.
9. Failure to show for rescheduled games results in forfeiture. Forfeited games are not rescheduled.
10. The infield fly rule shall apply.
11. One defensive conference or player move is allowed per half-inning. Pitchers can be moved any time.
12. In the interest of expediting the game, a courtesy runner may be substituted for an on-base catcher if there are two outs.
13. There is a six-run maximum or a three-out limit per half inning with the following exception: All runs produced as the result of an over-the-fence home run will count. There are NO "mercy" forfeits allowed in any league.

14. These rules apply to tournament play.

Player Eligibility for Machine Pitch - Ages 8, 9 & 10 Years as of the previous December.**Uniforms and Equipment**

A team warning may be issued for noncompliance with the following rules. The absence of a warning does not allow teams to disregard any rules. Umpires may assign an out for noncompliance.

1. All players must wear league-issued uniforms.
2. All players must wear long pants or baseball pants. **NO SHORTS.**
3. All players must wear socks and shoes. Tennis shoes or other all-purpose shoes with rubber cleats are allowed. Steel-cleats and hard-soled shoes are not allowed.
4. All male catchers must wear a protective cup.
5. It is strongly recommended that players wear mouth protection.
6. All catchers must wear approved Catchers equipment while playing in the catcher position.
7. Batters and base runners must wear protective helmets properly positioned to cover the head, ears, and temples. Chinstraps shall be used and kept snug on the player's chin. Refusal to wear a helmet by a batter or deliberate removal of the helmet by a base runner while ball is in play will result in the player being declared out. Should this result in the third out, no runs will count resulting from that play.
8. There is no mitt size or type restriction.
9. Uniforms must be tucked in at all times.
10. Metal Jewelry is not allowed. This does not include rope, rubber or friendship type bracelets.
11. Intentional throwing of helmets, bats, catching equipment or general equipment abuse will not be tolerated. Violators will be immediately ejected from the game.
12. Equipment must be kept off the playing field.

Balls: Boys Machine Pitch League uses a 9" or 9 ¼" official baseball.
Girls Machine Pitch League uses an 11" softball.

Player Requirements

1. Each team must have a minimum of seven players to start an official inning, except the first inning, which uses the guidelines, noted on page three of this document. Machine Pitch field ten players. There is a maximum of six infield players and four outfield players.
2. Each player that is present and physically able to play shall appear in the batting order. Players arriving late for a game will be placed at the bottom of the batting order. In case of injury, the next batter in order shall replace the injured player and the order resumes from that point. An injured batter is NOT considered out when it is his/her turn to bat again.
3. No player may sit out for two consecutive innings. Violation of this rule will result in FORFEITURE. The only exception may be an injury sustained during play of current game. Coaches must play the injured player at the top of the first inning that the player is ready to be admitted.
4. Any player exhibiting unsportsmanlike conduct may be removed from the game at the coach or umpire's discretion. This player is not subject to minimum playing requirements for that game.
5. Free substitution will be permitted for all positions.

Official Game Parameters

1. Each game shall consist of up to seven innings unless the game is stopped by the umpire for:

- a. Thunder, lightning, significant rain: The Brandon Township Weather Policy states that all games are stopped for any thunder or lightning, however distant, and all players must take cover in a building or vehicle, NOT in the DUGOUT (metal fencing). If conditions have not cleared after 15 minutes, either the umpire or the garage attendant per Brandon Township Recreation's current weather policy officially calls the game.
 - b. Unsafe playing conditions
 - c. Darkness
 - d. Forfeiture
2. All games will start at the designated start time. Any team not meeting minimum player requirements as of the scheduled start time will be allowed to play short for one complete inning. After one complete inning, if the minimum number of players has not reached the field, the umpire will call a forfeit.
 3. An official game should consist of a minimum of three and a half innings. In the event the visiting team is ahead after three and a half innings, the home team will bat in the bottom of the inning until three outs or the winning run is recorded. If, after four innings, the game is called when the teams have not had an equal number of times at bat, the score shall revert to the last complete inning. An exception exists if the home team's half of the incomplete inning exceeds the visitor's score; then the final score shall be as recorded when the game is called.
 4. Games cancelled by coaches for any reason will NOT be rescheduled. Games considered forfeits would not be rescheduled.
 5. **Game start times are listed on the league schedule. Teams must clear the field promptly if any game is scheduled after them on the same field. SEE YOUR SCHEDULE**
Lights will be extinguished on both Community Fields by 10:15 p.m.

Playing Field Dimensions

- **Machine Pitch**
Playing field consists of 60-foot baselines.
Pitching machine distance shall be 40 feet.

Player Injuries

WHEN IN DOUBT, CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY.

The safety and well being of players takes precedence over all other issues.

1. In the event a player is injured, the following minimum actions shall be taken:
 - a. Play will be stopped and the coach or his assignee shall immediately go to the aid of the player.
 - b. The player will not be removed from the playing field until it can be determined that it will not jeopardize the player's health or well being.
 - c. If the injured player cannot immediately leave the field, all players on the field shall return to their respective benches and remain there until the situation is over.
2. Play may be resumed under the following conditions:
 - a. A substitute for the injured player will be inserted and play immediately resumes.
 - b. The injured player may not return to the game until all bleeding is stopped. All blood on the player, clothing or equipment must be completely cleaned or exchanged. Extra jerseys are sometimes available from the Ball Garage Attendant.

Base Running Safety: If a player deliberately or maliciously runs into a fielder, that player may immediately be ejected from the game, at the discretion of the umpire. Such situations will be reviewed by Brandon Township Recreation and further action taken if necessary.

Special Machine Pitch League Rules

Base Running

1. Base runners cannot leave the base until the ball is hit, or an out will be declared.
2. Ball is no longer in play when pitcher attempts to receive the ball regardless if pitcher catches ball or not, unless pitcher is attempting to cover a base.
3. If a ball is thrown out of play, the umpire stops the game and advances runners' one base.
4. Base stealing is NOT permitted, even on a dropped third strike.
5. Base runners may not advance on a ball missed by the catcher.

Pitching

1. The pitching machine is considered part of the playing field. Batted balls or balls in play hitting the machine will be considered as having bounced off the pitching rubber with the following exceptions:
 - a. There will be a six-foot "dead ball" circle around the pitching machine. Any batted ball lodged or coming to rest inside this "dead ball circle" will be considered a dead ball. All play stops and runners are awarded the base they were attempting.
 - b. A ball that bounces off the pitching machine and is not touched by a fielder before it crosses an infield foul line is considered a foul ball.
2. The player in the pitching position will give the ball to the adult (umpires does not do this anymore) who will present the ball to the batter and then place the ball directly into the machine without pushing or spinning the ball. If the adult determines that this rule has been violated, the pitch is declared a "no pitch" and the ball is dead.
3. The pitcher must wear a helmet. Long hair must be tied back and kept under the helmet as much as possible.
4. The umpire will call all balls and all strikes. There can be strikeouts, but there will be no base-on-balls issued. Each batter receives three strikes.

Batting

1. Bunting is allowed.
2. Non-intentional bat throwing may result in an automatic out, to be determined by the umpire. A second incident in one game will result in ejection. Players may carry bat halfway down the baseline to help control bat throwing.
3. Coaches will be allowed to position a batter in the correct batting stance before the first swing.