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**9U RULES**

GOALS OF 9U PROGRAM

1. Create an environment which children and adults can have fun with baseball.
2. Teach baseball skills, rules, and strategies to our players.
3. Model and teach competitiveness with the emphasis on sportsmanship.
4. Promote increased self esteem and structure among children and adults.

GENERAL RULES

1. Full uniform and hats that are supplied by the league must be worn to all games - shirts are to be tucked in. It is mandatory that all players wear athletic supporters. Base runners, batter, and on-deck batter must wear batting helmets with chinstraps properly attached (or C-flap helmet). Players may wear running shoes or molded rubber cleats.
2. Each team is responsible to clean up their dugouts after the game.
3. The Home team is responsible to prepare the diamond, line the field and fill in any depressions before the game. After the game they are to rake the infield, home plate and pitching mound areas and make sure all equipment used during the game is returned to the bins and locked up. Tarps should be returned to the home plate and mound areas. **Bases should be left in place when another game follows but only if the other teams have started to arrive.** No children are allowed in equipment room or bins.
4. Before a game, each Head Coach must give a copy of his batting line-up to the opposing team and the home plate Umpire.
5. During a game, Coaches or parents cannot position themselves on the **outside of the backstop** behind the umpire to coach the team. Loss of game can occur if after a warning the problem still exists. During game play if the defensive coaches are on the playing field they can only be in foul territory near their dugout or past their dugout towards the outfield.
6. Coaches are responsible for the behavior of their team players, fans, and parents during games and to make sure that there is no abuse of the equipment.
7. A 9U player may be called up to play on a 11U team a maximum of 5 games plus one tournament. The 9U & 11U Coordinators plus the player’s Coach must be notified of the name of the player being called up, to ensure that the player is eligible to be called up. The player must receive the same treatment as regular players, must not play more innings than a regular team player and must not pitch.
8. A Level 5 baseball is to be used.

**ENDING THE GAME**

1. Games must start within 15 minutes of the scheduled start time.
2. It is solely the umpire’s discretion when to call the game due to darkness (should call open inning when light begins to fade), or for field or weather conditions.
3. No new innings to begin after 2 hours and 15 minutes from the time of the first pitch. The decision on whether to have another inning is based on the time of the 3rd out of the 4th inning. For example, if the 3rd out of the 4th inning occurs at the 2 hour and 14-minute mark, a 5th inning will be played. Any delay starting the next inning will not alter this decision (i.e., while discussing whether there should be another inning). This time limit applies to all games regardless of light conditions, following games, etc.
4. Games postponed due to rain may be rescheduled by the division coordinator if there is time available in the schedule.

**PLAYING FIELD**

1. Bases shall be 60 feet apart and shall be held by a base spike to avoid injury. The Pitching Machine is to be set up at the 42-foot rubber. All 1st year Pitchers must pitch from 40 feet and all 2nd year Pitchers must pitch from 42 feet, measured from the point of home plate.
2. The batter’s box is to be 3ft. wide x 6ft. long and the inside line 6” away from the side of the plate. It shall extend 3ft. in front of and 3ft. behind the center of the plate.

**GAME RULES**

1. The length of a 9U game shall be 5 innings as follows:
   * 2 pitching innings (3 run max) at start of game
   * 3 machine innings (5 run max)
     1. During playoffs only the 5th inning will be declared an “open” inning and will have a 10 run max limit rather than the normal limit of 5 runs.
     2. Four complete innings with no less than 9 players on the field for each team will constitute a legal game.
     3. A team’s turn at bat will consist of 3 outs or when the run limit has been met for the inning.
     4. Score is kept at this level. If a game is a tie at the end of the game, it will remain a tie. There is no mercy rule in this division.
     5. **Fair Play – Batting Order**- All players will be included in the continuous batting order.
   1. Continuous order shall be used throughout the season. Order can be reset on May 1st, and is not applicable for tournaments or playoffs.
   2. Whoever was due up next in your last game, will bat first in your next game following the same order.
   3. Absent players can be removed.
   4. Players are arriving late will be added to the end of the batting order. Any players not present by their first at bat will be removed from the lineup and not permitted to enter the game.
      1. **Fair Play - Positions** - No player can play more than (Before May 1st - 1 inning, After May 1st - 2 innings) in the same position in one game, except for the catcher, who may play 3 innings. Also, for the development of players, all players must play the infield for a minimum of 2 innings and outfield for a minimum of 1 inning per game. Should a game only go 4 innings all positional minimums must still be met.

*Playoffs: The Fair Play rule for positions will continue in playoffs. Positional minimums must be met in both a 4-inning or 5-inning game. Positional Maximums apply through 5-innings. Should an elimination playoff game go to extra innings the maximums on positional play will no longer apply.*

**Fair Play – Playing Time** -All players must sit one inning before a player can sit a second inning. No player can sit more than 2 innings per game except for disciplinary reasons. The Coach must inform the Umpire and the Coach of the opposing team of any disciplinary actions or if a player must leave the game early for any reason.

**Fair Play – Pitching –** A player may only pitch one inning within a week. A week is considered Monday – Sunday.

*Playoffs: The Fair Play rule for playing time will continue in playoffs through a 4-inning or 5-inning game. Should an elimination playoff game go into extra innings any player may sit so long as they do not sit 2 defensive innings in a row. Having sat in the 5th inning will count towards sitting defensive innings in a row.*

1. **Fair Play – Enforcement -** If a team is in violation of Fair Play the opposing coach will bring the issue to the offending coach as soon as it is discovered so that it can be corrected as best as possible. Violation of fair play will not result in a forfeit but may result in disciplinary action for the coach. The Division Coordinator should be notified of any Fair Play violations ASAP.
2. A coach or parent will operate the pitching machine (no players).
3. Before May 1st the pitching machine speed is set on 36 on Victoria Day until the end of the season the speed is set on 40. The back of the pitching machine should be even with the 46-foot pitching rubber. Each pitch delivered by the pitching machine is considered a strike unless the machine produces an obviously wild pitch: this will be decided by the Umpire and will not be called a strike. Players are allowed maximum 5 pitches or 3 strikes as per standard baseball rules. Unlimited foul balls are allowed; the player is called “out” if after 2 strikes the player leaves the next pitch or swings and misses the next pitched ball cleanly. The pitching machine cannot be altered in speed or position until the end of each inning.
4. The offensive team will operate the pitching machine. The ball must be held up before putting it into the machine so that the batter and the catcher know the ball is coming. The pitching machine operator cannot communicate with the base runners but can communicate with the hitter. The Pitcher must hand the ball to the pitching machine operator. **The Pitcher must stand to side of pitching machine. The pitcher shall not be positioned forward of the front legs while the ball is being pitched by the machine. Once the ball has been hit the player is permitted to field the ball in this area.**
5. If a batted ball hits the machine or machine operator, it is ruled a “dead ball” and the batter gets a base. The base runners advance one base only. If a thrown ball hits the machine during “live play” then the ball is ruled a “dead ball” and each base runner including the batter continues advancing to the base they were already advancing to.
6. The pitching innings are to be the first 2 innings of each game.

Pitchers can pitch one inning per game, and they cannot pitch two consecutive games.

1. No “Balk Balls” will be called against the pitcher.
2. There is no bunting in 9U**; a bunt is considered a strike.**
3. The batter cannot run on the **third strike dropped by the catcher**.
4. If a pitcher hits a batter or batters two (2) times the pitcher is to be replaced by another player. One trip to the mound by Coaches per inning – per pitcher. A pitcher is removed on the 2nd trip to the mound by Coaches. A pitcher withdrawn from the mound, but who stays in the game at another position shall not be permitted to return to the mound as a pitcher in the same game.
5. A batter who is hit by any pitched ball shall advance to first base.
6. On a pitched ball the catcher must throw the ball to the pitcher who is to remain near the mound unless the ball is overthrown to him.
7. Defensive player cannot run with the ball more than 10 feet to put an opposing player out, unless his/her teammates are not able to complete the play. If the defensive player does run more than 10 feet, the Umpire will rule the runner safe.
8. On a hit ball only, any ball thrown to 1st base or 3rd base that goes out of the playing area is ruled a dead ball, base runners will advance one additional base.
9. The base runner may only advance 1 additional base on an overthrow to any infield position, to encourage the players to try to make a play.
10. If the ball is thrown back to any infield position, and that infielder has control of the ball, and the base runners are not fully committed to advancing a base, the play is ruled dead, and the runner cannot advance to the next base.
11. Leadoffs are not allowed. The ball must cross home plate before any base runner(s) can leave the base(s). When a base runner leaves the base before the pitch crosses home plate and the batter DOES NOT hit the ball, the Umpire shall call “Leadoff” and the base runner must return to the base and No Out is called. When a base runner leaves the base before the pitch crosses home plate and the batter DOES hit the ball, the base runner is automatically out. The batter will be allowed to advance as normal.
12. Stealing to 3rd base is the only base that may be stolen during a game. When stealing to 3rd base, the runner may not advance to home base on an over-thrown or under-thrown ball from the catcher. A player on 1st or 3rd base may only advance on a hit or walk, when applicable.
13. Any base runner that overruns another base runner is declared out.
14. On infield plays thrown to first base, if the first baseman touches the ball with any part of his body or glove runners may not advance more than the base they were originally headed to.
15. No headfirst slides allowed; runner will be called out. Slide or Avoid Rule is in effect. If a play is being made, or is about to be made, it is MANDATORY for players of all age groups to slide or try to avoid a collision at all bases and home plate. Failure to do either will result in an automatic out. The ball is dead, and no runners may advance beyond the base that was last legally acquired. An umpire will have the option of ejection if the incident warrants such a measure.

NOTE - While running through 1st base is recommended for batters, a player sliding feet first into 1st base is not an automatic out.

1. The infield fly rule does not apply.
2. Catcher interference rule is in effect. No pitch is to be called. One warning is to be issued to the catcher and if interference occurs again the batter will be awarded 1st base.
3. With the introduction of pitchers in 9U, the game slows down. The Umpires have been instructed to use a liberal strike zone to speed up the game and encourage the players to try and hit the ball.
4. When a batter receives 4 balls from the kid pitcher, rather than walk, a tee will be placed for the batter to hit from a tee. Any swing and miss will count as a strike in their count.
5. The Umpire will call interference on a defensive player if the bag or plate is not partly exposed. The runner will be awarded the base.
6. Calling the players out for throwing the bat will be at the umpire’s discretion. If the batter is called out no base runner will advance.
7. If a player has started the game and must leave before it is over, he/she will be deleted from the line-up and no outs will occur. If a player is injured during the game and cannot continue, he/she will not be considered an out in any further at bats.
8. All BC Minor Baseball rules will be in effect, but NLBB rules take precedence.