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Community League 8

Minnetonka Baseball Association (MBA) Community League 8 Rules

The **Community-8 League** emphasizes the basic skills of throwing, catching, and hitting while advancing tactical skills like base running and situational fielding. Ten players play defensively at one time and all players bat in continuous order. Scores within games and team standings are kept which creates a more competitive atmosphere. However, skill development, sportsmanship, and fun are still the primary objectives. Minor League-8 uses a medium-soft ball and sling based pitching machines.

Conduct:

1. Players, coaches, parents and fans will observe the *MBA Code of Conduct* at all times.
2. Only players and designated coaches are allowed on the field or in the dugouts at any time – no exceptions. 2 defensive coaches are allowed on the field for their half of an inning to help position players and coach in teaching moments after the play. This rule is in effect for the 1/2 of the season only and coaches are not to be on the field after Memorial Day.

General Rules:

1. The home team is in charge of setting up and putting away the pitching machine. Before putting the machine away, please check if there is a game requiring the machine after yours.
2. All games will be played with the sling machine set at the same tension level (to be determined by the League Coordinator and coaches prior to the first game of the season).
3. The home team will occupy the third base dugout.
4. The home team provides game balls. Game balls must be medium-soft type.
5. If two umpires, one serves at home plate and one serves as base umpire. Single umpires will serve at home plate and make all base calls. With no umpires, coaches or parents familiar with the rules should substitute.
6. Teams are responsible for cleaning up the dugout and bleacher areas following each game.
7. All batters, base runners and player-base-coaches must wear a helmet. Catchers must wear all catchers' gear including a catcher's mask. All players must wear a protective cup.

Time Limits and Game Completion:

1. Each game will consist of six innings or less if the 1hr 30min time limit is met first.
2. A half-inning consists of 3 outs or 5 runs, whichever comes first.
3. A game is considered official after 4 innings or 3 ½ if the home team is ahead.
4. No new inning shall start after 1hr 10 minutes from the official start of game; the official start time is to be noted by the umpire and should be communicated to each coach prior to the game.
5. There is no hard stop time; if an inning starts prior to the 1:10 mark it will finish regardless of the time (both teams bat unless the home team is ahead); this could mean some games will run late.
6. The first new inning that starts at or after the 1 hour mark and before the 1 hour and 10 minute mark of the game will be determined the last inning. This last inning will be expired when a team obtains 3 outs or the home team takes the lead (no five run rule). If this inning ends before the 1:10 mark, it is still considered the last inning and the game is over regardless of the score.
7. If an inning starts prior to the 1 hour mark it will be played using the normal 5 run / 3 out rules (because it did not start between the 1:00 and 1:10 mark). If, for example, an inning started at the 59 minute mark and lasted 11 minutes, which puts you past the 1 hour and 10 minute mark, the game is over. Neither team will benefit from the last inning rule regardless of the score.
8. All games ending in a tie will be recorded as a tie. All tied games having completed a minimum of 4 innings, which is called due to darkness or weather (umpires discretion), will result in a tie. Exception: with weather permitting, when there are no further games scheduled for that field for that day, the game must be played until the tie is broken.
9. Any game called due to darkness or weather that has not completed 4 innings (or 3.5 innings if the home team is ahead) should be scheduled for completion at the next earliest time convenient to both teams.

Fielding

1. Teams play with 10 defensive players comprised of a full infield (with catcher) and 4 outfielders. With less than 10 fielders, a full infield must be in place with the remainder filling out the outfield.
2. Outfielders must start each pitch at least 20 feet from the infield surface. Markers or chalk lines should be in place to designate this minimum distance.
3. A team must field a full infield with at least two outfielders (8 players) or forfeit the game.
4. Only fielders assigned to an infield position can make a play at a base. Outfielders may not cover a bag for a force play or make a tag on a base runner unless it occurs on an overthrow.
5. The pitcher must line up no closer to the plate than the pitching machine.

Position Rotation

1. A player cannot play a single position in two consecutive innings and no more than two total innings in a game. Each player must have at least 2 innings in the infield in an official game. The only exception to this rule is for the visiting team if a game is called after 3 ½ innings with the home team in the lead.
2. A player must not be scheduled to play more time in the outfield/bench than the infield for a six inning game. For a 12-person team, the scheduled playing time for each player should be exactly 3 innings in outfield/bench and 3 innings in the infield. For teams with fewer players, some players may play more infield than outfield/bench as long as no player is in the infield more than 1 inning longer than any teammate.
3. Violation of any part of these position rotation rules will constitute a forfeit unless extenuating circumstances are vetted through the League Coordinator prior to the game.

Hitting and Running

1. A coach from the offensive team will "pitch" utilizing the machine.
2. The umpire will call and count strikes – swinging and looking. A batter can only strike out swinging. Balls are not counted. As such, there are no walks.
3. Teams will bat in continuous order with all players batting. The batting order must not change throughout the season. The on-deck batter for the last out of the game will be lead off the next game.
4. In the event a batted ball strikes the pitching machine or the coach operating machine before the ball is touched by a defensive player, the umpire must declare the ball dead and the play shall be replayed. This is not to be counted as a foul or strike.
5. There is no bunting, stealing or leading off. The runner may not leave the bag until the ball is hit.
6. Headfirst slides are not allowed except when returning to a base. Any runner making a head first slide to a new base should be called out.
7. A batter is out if they throw their bat. There need not be any warnings for thrown bats. Umpire will be the judge of whether a bat was actually thrown.
8. Runners/batters may advance a maximum of two bases at their own risk with the following limitations:
 - A runner on second must stop at third (and cannot score) on any batted ball that does not reach the outfield grass. To be clear: a runner can only score from second if the batted ball reaches the outfield grass.
 - When the pitcher is in possession of the ball within 10 feet of the pitching machine, the play is dead for all base runners not already in purposeful motion toward the next base. Advancing bases runners may not advance beyond the immediate intended base. If there is any play on the advancing base runners, the play is still dead for the other runners.
9. Base coaches will be adults; alternatively a team player wearing a helmet can be used.
10. There is no on-deck location. No practice swinging is allowed anywhere except at the plate by the current batter.

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