GIRLS MACHINE PITCH 3rd-5th GRADE SOFTBALL LEAGUE RULES

1. Playing Field and Equipment

1.0 - Field Dimensions

a. 3-5th grade - 35 feet pitching distance / 60 feet base length / Pitching Machine 30-32 MPH

b. The pitching machine's front leg(s) shall be set at a distance of thirty five (35) feet from the rear point of home plate.

c. 11" softball is used

d. 10 players on the field. 4 in the outfield.

1.1 - Uniforms

a. All players on a team shall wear uniforms identical in color, trim and style. Numbers are required for all players. No matching numbers permitted for 2 separate players.

b. Pitchers may wear sunglasses if they are not deemed distracting in the umpire's judgment.

c. Metal spikes are prohibited in all divisions.

d. Acceptable footwear can include rubber molded cleats/hard plastic cleats, turf shoes, or tennis shoes.

1.2 - Equipment

a. The catcher may wear a catcher's mitt or a regular fielding glove.

b. The first baseman may wear a first baseman's glove or a regular fielding glove.

c. All players other than the first baseman and catcher must wear a regular fielding glove.

d. All players shall use a double ear-flap protective helmet while at bat or while running the bases.

e. Catchers shall wear all appropriate protective gear including a catcher's helmet with facemask and either a built-in extended throat guard or a separately attached throat guard, chest protector, & shin and/or leg guards. Skull helmets shall not be worn; helmets shall fully cover both ears.

g. The pitcher, 1st baseman, & 3rd baseman can wear a protective face guard when on the field.

h. It is highly encouraged that all players wear a protective face guard.

1.3 - Bat Restrictions

a. The official bat must bear either the ASA 2000 or 2004 certification mark and not be listed on the 2020 current USA Softball Non-Approved Bat List.

b. All game bats shall be set in front of the dugout and inspected by umpires prior to the start of the game.

c. First offense for using an illegal bat:

1. If the umpire discovers that a bat does not conform to section 1.3 (a) and the ball has been put in play but before the next legal pitch, the defensive team will have the choice of the result of the play, or the batter being called out and all runners returning to the base occupied before the pitch. The bat will be removed from the game; however, it is not grounds for ejection.

2. If the bat is found to be illegal following the next legal pitch to any batter after the ball is put in play by such bat, the bat is removed from the game with no penalty.

3. If a bat is to be found illegal and the ball has not been put in play by that batter, the bat is removed from the game with no penalty.

d. Second offense for using an illegal bat:

1. If a team is found in violation of this rule a second time, then the head coach will be ejected in addition to the First Offense penalty.

2. Starting and Ending a Game

2.0 - Home Team

a. Home team is predetermined according to the league schedule. The designated Away Team shall bat first to start the inning.

2.1 - Regulation Game

a. A regulation game consists of seven innings for all age divisions, unless the time limit has been reached (Rule 2.02) or a mercy run rule is obtained (Rule 2.03).

2.2 - Time Limit

a. For time limit purposes, the end of an inning consists of when the last out is made at the bottom of the inning.

b. Time limit for 3rd -4th grade is 1 hour and 10 minutes. It is up to the ump to decide if a new inning shall be played due to the time. If the home team is losing then they will get to bat last. If we have lost daylight and the home team did not get to bat last then we will have to finish that inning the next game day in between games or the next time those two teams play. Please be considerate and understanding that the ref is just trying to allow the kids as much playing time as they can. There is no way to know how long an inning will last. The ump will keep notes on the outs, players on bases, and score. Coaches and umpires are responsible to keep the same batting order. Please be honest and fair.

c. Once the time limit is reached:

1. The inning will be completed.

2. If the home team is leading and currently batting, the game is over.

3. If the inning ends in a tie, the game is over and ends in a tie game.

d. If at the end of a regulation game (7 Innings) the score is tied and there is time remaining on the clock, then extra innings may follow. If the game is still tied at the end of an extra inning and the time limit has expired, the game is over and ends in a tie.

2.3 - Run Rules

a. A run rule of 7 runs per inning will be enforced for each inning.

2.4 - Mercy Rule

This is up to the ump and coaches to decide if they want to enforce due to the game getting out of hand.

a. An imposed Mercy (Run) Rule shall be used to complete a regulation game when one team's margin of lead is greater than or equal to the prescribed limit. The home team shall not bat if they are winning, and the mercy requirement is met prior to the bottom half of the inning. Similarly, if the home team is batting and meets the mercy requirement in the bottom half of the inning the home team shall cease batting and the game shall end.

b. Mercy (Run) Rules are as follows:

1. Run differential of 12 runs after the 3rd inning

2. Run differential of 10 runs after the 4th inning

3. Run differential of 8 runs after the 5th inning

2.5 - Lineups

a. When submitting a lineup card to the opposing team, coaches must use the player's last name and uniform number. No two players may have the same number.

b. Teams may play an official game with an eight-player lineup. If a team plays with an eight-player lineup, no out shall be declared for the ninth position in the batting lineup each turn at bat. A ninth player and all subsequent players may be added to the bottom of the batting lineup as soon as they become available. The only players that are eligible to be added to the lineup must be in uniform. No coach may pick up a player from another team or in attendance that is not in the team's uniform. All players added to the game must also be on that team's roster.

c. If a team drops to only seven eligible players, then that team must forfeit.

d. Teams must use a continuous lineup (Round Robin), and all players may move freely in defensive positions within the continuous lineup scenario. Players under the traditional lineup of 9 players will be allowed to re-enter their starting position 1 time per game.

e. If a player must leave the lineup for any reason except for an injury/illness, that position in the lineup will be called an out. Once skipped, that player will not be able to return to the game.

f. If a player is ejected from the game, then their position in the lineup will be declared an out each time it comes up.

g. If a player leaves the lineup due to illness or injury and is not able to bat when their turn comes up in the order, the coach is allowed to skip the at-bat, and it will not count as an out against the team. However, the player is not allowed to return for the remainder of the game.

h. Players will bat the lineup until 3 outs have been made regardless of the number of times the lineup has been batted through.

i. A player who shows up after the start of the game must be listed as the last player in the batting order. If the player is not there by their turn at bat, they will be skipped with no penalty unless playing with 8 batters and an out occurs. When the player shows up, they may bat their turn in the lineup.

j. If a player bats out of order and the offense is caught while the player is still at bat and prior to

a play being made, the lineup shall be corrected, and play will continue without penalty. Once a play has been made (base hit, walk, out, etc.) this rule will be null and void and play will continue without penalty. It is the duty of the coaches & scorekeepers to ensure that the correct players are at bat to avoid issues. The umpire shall enforce the rules but will not be responsible for monitoring lineups.

2.6 - Game Cancellations Due to Weather

a. If a game is called due to weather (rain, lighting, etc.), light failure or other acts of God and cannot be resumed, it is a regulation game if 4-innings have been completed or 3 and half innings have been completed and the home team is leading.

b. The Cloud-9 will oversee alerting teams in the events of cancellations or rescheduled due to the weather. This will be done through weather line updates, email, texts, or phone calls to coaches, and updated on the league website.

c. Rescheduling of the game shall follow the guidelines set below:

A game that cannot be declared a regulation game, shall be declared a rain-out game. Coaches will be contacted by Cloud-9 to reschedule the game for a later date. Games that are cancelled due to weather are to be handled as follows:

1. Cloud-9 will post on their website cloud-9bethaltosportsleague.com by 4 pm.

d. HEAT DELAY/CANCELATION based on AccuWeather: Game cancellations/alterations will be based on the following:

1. A game time heat index of 105 degrees or higher will result in postponement.

2. A game time heat index of 100 - 104 degrees games will be shortened. TBall games will be reduced by 15 minutes, 1-2 grade baseball & Softball will be reduced by 15 minutes, 3-4 grade baseball will be reduced by 20 minutes, 3-5 grade softball reduced by 20 minutes, 5-8 grade baseball will be reduced by 20 minutes.

3. A game time heat index of 99 degrees or lower will result in normal length of games.

Any game cancellations, postponements, or heat-related schedule changes will typically be announced no earlier than 4:00 PM. We monitor weather conditions and heat indexes throughout the day to make the safest and most informed decision possible.

Coaches will be notified first, followed by updates on our Facebook page and website.

Drink Early, Drink Often:

Remember, the best protection for heat illness is water and rest. The maxim is: drink early, drink often, even when players aren't thirsty. Players should arrive for games/practices adequately hydrated and drink at least five (5) ounces of water every 15-20 minutes while they are active in the heat.

Ask players to bring water or a sports drink with modest amounts of electrolytes, but nothing with caffeine that acts as a diuretic and drains water from the body.

Evidence shows that sunscreen of at least SPF 15 should be applied to exposed skin every time children are in the sun for extended periods, to help keep the player cool and to protect against future skin cancer risk.

2.7 - Game Cancellations (Other than Weather)

a. If a coach needs to cancel a game for any reason outside of weather, they will need to contact Cloud-9 scheduler/field manager and opposing coach outside of 48 hours of the date of the game to be canceled.

b. Rescheduling of the game shall follow the guidelines set below:

Any team reporting a cancellation inside of 48 hours due to any reason other than weather shall be subject to forfeiture if the opposing team is not willing to reschedule.

2.8 - Rescheduling

a. In the event of a reschedule, both teams will be contacted by Cloud-9 to work out a mutually agreed upon reschedule date.

b. All coaches are required to have a working email. Please “Reply All” when responding to emails so that everyone can see responses.

c. Both coaches will be given 1 week from the date of the cancellation to work out a reschedule date and contact Cloud-9 via email/phone with the agreed upon date(s) to confirm availability.

d. Once confirmed, the rescheduled date shall be updated via the online schedule.

e. If coaches are unable to agree on a reschedule date within the 1-week requirement, then the game will be rescheduled for the first date that both teams are available per the online schedule.

f. If one coach responds and the other doesn’t within the 1-week requirement, the original game will be declared a forfeit for the non-responding coach with the win going to the responding coach. NOTE: A great deal of time goes into prepping fields, scheduling concession stand workers, scheduling umpires, etc. Cloud-9 will not waste money on these activities in lieu of a non-responsive coach by assuming you will show up to a rescheduled game that you haven’t responded to. Please work with us to ensure that everyone has a positive experience.

g. Any team failing to show up for a rescheduled game shall be declared as a forfeit and a win awarded to the other team in attendance.

2.9 - Coaches

a. The maximum number of coaches allowed per team is 3.

b. All coaches and managers need to be listed on the coach's roster as a coach or manager. Only coaches that are listed on the team roster are eligible to coach in the dugout. The only exception to this is in the absence of a coach, an adult (age 15 or older) may help assist in their place. A max of 3 coaches will still be always in effect.

c. In the case of a coach's ejection, you may not bring in a substitute coach and/or parent to assist for the remainder of the game.

d. The purpose of these rules is to eliminate anyone other than coaches and players being on the playing field or in the dugout. This assists the umpires in determining who should or should not be on the field.

2.10 - Tie Breaker Rules for win lose stats

a. If two teams are tied at the end of the season, the following tie breaker rules will be in effect.

1. Head-to-head against each other

2. If head to head is tied then they will play a championship game and the last games scheduled for the season could be rearranged.

3.0 - Courtesy Runner

a. A courtesy runner will be allowed for the pitcher and catcher of record from the previous inning on defense. A courtesy runner may be used at any time regardless of the number of outs there are in the inning.

b. The courtesy runner shall be the player who recorded the last BATTED out. If no outs have been recorded in the game, the courtesy runner shall be the last batter in the lineup.

c. If the last batted out is the pitcher or catcher, the courtesy runner shall be the previous batted out to said pitcher and/or catcher.

d. Any one courtesy runner may only be used one time per inning. If a player must run a second time in one inning, the previous batted out prior to them shall be the courtesy runner.

e. If a courtesy runner is determined to be ineligible, a proper replacement (if available) will be used without penalty. If no proper courtesy runner is available, the pitcher and/or catcher must run for themselves.

3.1 - Pitching

a. 5 pitches or three swinging strikes.

b. A player may only be Intentionally Walked once per game by announcement from the defensive team.

3.2 - Batting

a. Batters will have up to 15 seconds to prepare for the pitch of the ball. (ex. taking signals from the 3rd base coach, practice swings, etc.) Time shall be started upon the pitcher's receipt of the ball. Batters should be back in the batter's box and prepared to take the next pitch upon the conclusion of 15 seconds. The purpose of this rule is to avoid purposeful delays of game.

b. If a batted ball hits the pitching machine or the coach feeding the pitching machine it will be a dead ball and the batter/runners may only advance 1 base.

3.3 - Charged Conferences

a. Offense - 1 visit to the mound per pitcher per inning.

b. Offense - On the 2nd visit to the mound in the same inning to a pitcher, the pitcher must be removed from the pitching position.

c. Defense - 3 per game (Either used in 1 inning or spread out across all innings)

3.4 - Player Contact

a. Whenever a tag play is evident:

1. A runner must slide or seek to avoid contact with the fielder and/or catcher to avoid injury. Attempting to jump, leap, or dive over the fielder and/or catcher shall not be interpreted as seeking to avoid contact and will result in the runner being out unless a player is laying prone on the ground in the runner's base path. Only then will this action be acceptable to avoid contact. Malicious contact shall supersede all obstruction penalties both offensively and defensively.

2. A runner must NOT slide head first into home plate.

3. A defensive player shall not use excessive force when contacting a player.

4. Malicious contact shall supersede all obstruction penalties both offensively and defensively.

d. Offensive Penalty: The runner shall be called out and may be ejected from the game at the umpire's discretion. Comment: When enforcing this rule, the umpire should judge the runner's intent. If the umpire feels the contact was unintentional, the runner should only be declared out. If the umpire feels the contact was intentional and/or malicious, the runner should be declared out and ejected from the game.

e. Defensive Penalty: If the umpire feels the contact was intentional and/or malicious, the defensive players will be ejected from the game. Any outs that were made will stand.

f. All base runners must stay within 3 feet of the baseline. Any runner moving outside of 3 feet to avoid a tag that will be called out.

3.5 - Infield Fly Rule

a. A fair fly ball, not including a line drive or an attempted bunt, which can be caught by an infielder, pitcher, or catcher with ordinary effort when first & second or first, second, and third bases are occupied with less than two outs.

b. To properly help to use the infield fly rule (and some other rules) and for safety and sportsmanship, infielders are first base, second base, third base, shortstop, pitcher, catcher. The 3 outfielders should be nearer than 15 feet from the baseline or the deepest positioned infielder in an approximate semi-circle. If the fly ball is dropped and the runners elect to try to advance, there is no force out on these runners, they must be tagged.

4. Miscellaneous League Rules

4.0 - Field Protests

a. There will be no field protests. Player eligibility protests only (see rule 6.03).

4.1 - Acceptable Behavior

a. Coaches, Players and Fans shall conform to the Code of Conduct outlining acceptable behavior. Umpires will have the final say in determining if someone isn't meeting the behavior standards and will be subject to ejection. The first offense will result in a warning. The

a second offense will result in ejection from the park.

4.2 - Ejections

a. Any coach, player, parent, fan, etc. that is ejected must leave the confines of the sports complex immediately. Failure to do so will result in a forfeit.

b. All ejections will be reviewed by the Cloud-9 staff. Any coach getting an ejection may serve a game or multiple games suspension. Disciplinary action will be on a case-by-case basis due to the severity of the ejection/infraction of the coach, player or parent as determined by Cloud-9.

c. Abusive language or cursing shall not be tolerated under any circumstances and shall result in an automatic ejection.

d. Throwing of equipment shall result in an automatic ejection.

e. If necessary, a team may be forced to forfeit a game and/or be removed from the league.

4.3 - Field Rules

a. When there is a game being played on any field regardless of age division, teams are not allowed to warm up in the outfield. Teams warming up must remain out of all 'in play territory'.

b. No soft toss against the fences.

c. Absolutely no alcohol or alcohol consumption is allowed within the Parks or at the Ball Fields.

d. Food is not allowed in the dugouts. Coaches may bring coolers for water or cold towels in the dugouts. Dugouts should be cleaned out after each game.

5. Player Eligibility

5.0 - Player Eligibility

a. For all age divisions, the grade cutoff date is September 1st.

b. A player's grade division that they may participate with will be the grade of that player on September 1st. This cutoff date will be strictly enforced. Example: If a player finished 4th grade end of May and league begins in June then that player is considered a 4th grader. You do not count grade going into until that school year starts.

c. A player may play up in age divisions but may not play down in a lower age division.

5.1 - Official Rosters

a. Each coach shall carry and present the official roster at the start of every game to the opposing team and umpire. It is recommended that coaches keep the official roster stapled inside of their teams' scorebooks.

b. An official roster shall be all that is needed to be carried by the coaches.

c. Players may be added to the roster up until the start of the first game.

5.2 - Player Protest

a. If a coach believes a player may not be of legal age, they may protest to the League Director. If the offending player is deemed ineligible, the offending team will forfeit all games in which the offending player participated.

5.3 - Multiple Team Eligibility

a. A player shall be permitted to participate on multiple teams but only one team per age division regardless of classification with the following exceptions.

b. The player must pay a separate registration fee for each league division they will be playing, prior to the season starting.