

ALAMO HEIGHTS LITTLE LEAGUE MACHINE PITCH BOYS – (first year player) PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY – MINORS DIVISION

The purpose of the Machine Pitch program is to teach the game of baseball to children and develop their skill and knowledge of the game. Practices, games and equipment are controlled to reduce risk and maximize learning opportunities. The emphasis of the program is on learning the game of baseball in a way that is fun and instructional. All games will utilize a pitching machine operated by the game's Umpire. AHLL will offer two (2) divisions for Machine Pitch baseball to better transition the player from T Ball and then prepare the player as they make the advancement to Minors (Kid Pitch) Baseball.

Machine Pitch Minors Division – first year players

This division is designed to transition the ball player from T Ball to Machine Pitch. The emphasis on this division will be more instructional in nature. The balls used in these games will still be the softer type balls. Some differences the players will notice from T Ball to Machine Pitch Minors are:

- Each half inning will end when either 3 outs have been made by the defensive team or 5 runs have been scored by the batting team
- Each batter will receive a maximum of 5 pitches to put the ball in play
- The defensive team shall position an infielder at each of the 6 infield positions (to include catcher) and the remaining players will be positioned in the outfield
- Players will be rotated from infield to outfield every inning
- Scores will be kept for each game but no Standings for the Division

MP Minors - GROUND RULES

January 2013

A. Preliminaries. Each coach shall furnish their batting order with player names and numbers to the announcer's booth prior to the game. The home team is responsible for adult supervision of the announcers' booth (including collection of the lineups and keeping the official scorer's book). The visiting team is responsible for providing 1 person for the concession stand for the entire game. Failure to provide these positions will result in delaying the game. The umpires will not start the game until these requirements are met, and the playing time of this game will be reduced by the time it takes to fill these positions.

B. Late Players. If a player arrives after the first pitch is thrown, the coach of that team shall call time out and notify the opposing coach that the player has arrived late and will

place this player in the last batting position on the roster.

C. Regulation Game. Games shall last one (1) hour – or – four (4) innings, whichever comes first. An inning cannot begin after 50 minutes from start of game. If an inning extends past the allotted time period, that inning will be allowed to conclude. Makeup games will be scheduled subject to field and date availability at the discretion of the Commissioner.

D. Five Run Rule. The Machine Pitch program will have a three out or (5) run limit per half inning, whichever occurs first. Six (6) run rule will be in effect after three (3) innings.

E. Machine Set Up. Before the game, coaches for both teams along with the Umpire will mutually agree on the speed and setting of the pitching machine. Recommended range is from 35 – 40mph. Any change of speed or setting of the pitching machine must be mutually agreed upon by the coaches, with any dispute settled by the umpire. The goal is that the machine be set to a speed that both teams have a good opportunity to put the ball in play when batting.

F. Batters – There will be a maximum of 5 pitches per batter. If the 5th pitch is fouled, the batter will continue to receive pitches and remain at bat as long as he/she continues to foul off pitches or put the ball in play. If a batter “takes” the last pitch (and it is in the strike zone), they will be called out. Teams will bat their entire team roster in the same order throughout the game.

The Umpire has the discretion to not count a pitch if he/she determines the machine delivered a pitch outside the strike zone, provided the batter did not swing at it. The Umpire may adjust the machine at any point to maintain its ability to throw strikes.

Bunting – A maximum of two (2) bunts are allowed per inning.

Base running - When a defensive player misses a thrown ball at a base in which a play is being made, all runners may advance one additional base (only) at risk of getting out. If the runner or runners reach the additional base safely, he or she will *not* advance any further and the play is dead. Play is stopped when the ball comes into the infield from the outfield *and* is in the possession of any player standing in the infield. If the ball is thrown into the infield and no players make an attempt to retrieve the ball, the runners may advance one additional base at their own risk. Sportsmanship is the better form of discretion on this matter.

No Leading off or base stealing.

G. Defense.

Positions - Correct positions must be played. A defense will consist of six players playing Infield (one player at each Infield position) and the remaining players will be placed in the Outfield. Outfielders must be positioned in the Outfield grass representing true Outfield play. Players shall be rotated from Infield to Outfield every other inning. The pitcher shall occupy a

space to either side of the pitching machine but not in front of the mound. Two defensives coach are allowed on the field at a time.

H. Machine Interference. If a ball hits the pitching machine, or comes to rest under it, the Umpire will call the play dead and the runners will be allowed the next base they were attempting to get to. The Umpire has the discretion to call any ball dead and determine the location of a runner.

I. Infield Fly Rule. The Infield Fly rule does not apply.

J. Full Roster. Players can be removed from a team and placed on a Minor team in the event the need arises during the season. However, these players are not eligible for city or all-star play.

K. Weather. The Board Members in charge of Field Maintenance or, if absent, the Board Members on duty, will determine whether or not the fields are playable due to weather. Once a game is begun, the umpire makes all judgments regarding halting play due to weather conditions. If a game is only temporarily halted, it is resumed from the point at which it is stopped. The rescheduling of any halted or suspended game shall be at the sole discretion of the Commissioner

L. Sportsmanship and Coaching. Good sportsmanship should be used at all times by every participant or observer of the game. Taunting, negative comments, and foul language will not be tolerated. The Umpire must first grant coaches a timeout before leaving the dugout. Any coach that comes on to the field without asking for a time out first may be removed from the game. This does not include injuries. The Umpire may remove any participant from the game, or any observer from the facilities. Each team may have one defensive coach on the field to give constructive suggestions to the players. The coach must be positioned in the outfield behind the base path and cannot interfere by touching the ball or players during the play. The head coach will be required at 3rd base with an assistant coach at 1st base. The head coach will be more familiar with league philosophy and should not take advantage of an opportunity to run-up the score.

M. After the Game. Both teams are responsible for cleaning their respective dugouts and spectator bleachers.