

# **Sugar Land Little League MACHINE AAA DIVISION GROUND RULES**

**The Little League Baseball Official Regulations and Playing Rules shall govern the “Playing Rules” for the Machine AAA Division.**

**The Sugar Land Little League Machine AAA Division Ground Rules listed below are additional, modified, or detailed explanations of the “Playing Rules” for the Machine AAA Division only.**

1. **SCHEDULED GAME START TIME:** All games shall begin promptly at the scheduled start time. If a team is unable to field at least 8 players by the game’s scheduled start time, then the game will be rescheduled by both managers' agreement. If the game cannot be rescheduled, the game will be canceled.
2. **CURFEW:** There is a 1 hour & 30-minute time limit, in which no new inning shall begin. No new inning will begin after 10:00 pm and no game will be played after 10:30 pm.
3. **LENGTH OF GAMES:** All games shall consist of six (6) innings (5 ½ if the home team is ahead), unless the game is shortened by the umpire due to time, run-rule, weather, etc. The ten-run rule applies after 4 innings (3-1/2 if the home team is ahead). All shortened games must consist of at least 4 innings (3 ½ if the home team is ahead) to be considered a complete game unless the time limit has expired, and the inning has been completed. Games tied after 6 innings will be considered complete and recorded as a tie.
4. **RUN RULE:** A 5-run per inning rule is in effect through the first 3 innings, after 3 innings unlimited runs are allowed. Note: continuation scoring will not be allowed past 5 runs; if the batter hits the ball to score the 5<sup>th</sup> run the play will stop and the side is retired. The only way more than 5 runs can be scored is on a home run (over the fence).
5. **LENGTH BETWEEN INNINGS:** Teams shall change positions as rapidly as possible at the end of each inning. Play should resume within 1 minute after the last out of the previous half-inning.
6. **RAIN-OUTS:** Rain-out games shall be rescheduled by the League Division VP. In the event a team cannot field enough players on the initial makeup date and notifies the Division VP and Opposing Manager 24 hours prior to the scheduled game time, a second date will be set. If said team cannot make the 2nd makeup date, that team shall forfeit – the game score will be recorded as 7-0.
7. **COACHES:** Each team is allowed, 1 manager and 3 coaches. Base coaches will consist of 2 adults. No defensive coaches will be allowed on the field. An adult coach from the offensive team will feed the machine. An adult coach must be in the dugout at all times. There is no coaching from the adult feeding the machine. A first offense will result in a warning from the umpire. A second offense will result in the coach’s removal as the machine feeder.
8. **BATTING ORDER:** Each team will use a continuous batting order with unrestricted defensive substitutions. A player who arrived after the start of the game will be inserted at the bottom of the batting order. The mandatory play rule applies, see rule #10.
9. **PLAYERS:** The Machine AAA division is for 7/8 league age players.

10. MANDATORY PLAY: Each player on the team's roster and present at the start of the game shall play a minimum of 1 inning in the infield no later than the 4<sup>th</sup> inning and may not sit more than 2 innings in a row. The penalty for violating the mandatory play rule will be assessed to the Manager as follows:

1<sup>st</sup> Offense – Manager suspended from the next scheduled game,

2<sup>nd</sup> violation – Manager suspended from the following two games,

3<sup>rd</sup> violation – Manager will be removed from the league as a manager.

[EXCEPTION: for weather, shortened games, illness, injury]

11. INFIELD FLY: The infield fly rule is not in effect.

12. DEFENSIVE FIELDERS:

a. Infielders may not position themselves more than 5 feet from the baselines, not the grass line. This limitation is removed upon presentation of the batter "squaring around to bunt"; at that point, the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> basemen are allowed to move no more than halfway toward home plate.

b. A team may utilize up to 4 outfielders. Outfielders must remain behind the 30ft stripe until the ball is pitched. No unassisted play can be made by an outfielder on a force play. He must throw the ball to the base.

c. The designated pitcher must have both feet behind the pitching rubber prior to each pitch (one in the dirt and one in the grass). The pitcher may not cross this plane until the ball crosses the plate. The pitcher must also wear a protective helmet with facemask.

13. STOPPAGE OF PLAY: Play will continue until the lead runner is stopped and/or the umpire has called time. The position of each base runner will be the last base legally touched unless otherwise determined by the umpire.

14. BASE RUNNERS: Steals are allowed, but the runner must not leave the base until the ball crosses home plate and must attempt to steal right away. The runner may not advance if he/she does not attempt to steal immediately after the ball crosses home plate. The runner may only advance one base on a steal attempt unless the ball is thrown out of play. Runners may not leave the base until the ball is hit or crosses home plate. The runner may only attempt 3<sup>rd</sup> base to home plate on a batted ball.

15. DUGOUT ASSIGNMENTS: The Home team will occupy the 3<sup>rd</sup> base dugout while the Visiting team will occupy the 1<sup>st</sup> base dugout.

16. PITCHING MACHINE: The pitching machine will be set at 42mph for the entire season. The back leg of the machine must be positioned to touch the front of the pitching rubber (46 feet). If a batted ball strikes the pitching machine, cord, or coach the ball is dead, and the batter and all runners automatically advance 1 base. The cord hanging from the machine and the coach are considered part of the machine.

17. PITCH LIMIT: There will be a 4-pitch limit per batter. If the batter fouls the 4<sup>th</sup> pitch, the batter will continue until the ball is hit fair, the batter strikes out, or the batter fouls another pitch. If the batter does not foul the fourth pitch or put the ball in play, the batter is retired (provided that the 4<sup>th</sup> pitch is a reasonably hittable pitch, determined by the umpire.) If the batter swings at the fourth pitch that is not hittable, but that swing is the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike for the batter, the batter is retired.

18. **PROTESTS:** Only rule infraction protests will be allowed. All disputes must be settled within 5 minutes, by the Lead Umpire. The Manager may, with rule book in hand and permission from the Lead Umpire, question a call regarding a ruling. The Umpires' decision at the end of 5 minutes is final. **JUDGEMENT CALLS CAN NOT BE PROTESTED.**
19. **ON-DECK BATTER:** No on-deck batter is allowed. Players must remain in the dugout and are not allowed to swing bats in the dugout.
20. **BUNTS:** Bunts are allowed. No batter shall be allowed to fake bunt (no slashing) and then swing the bat. In the event of this occurrence it will result in the batter ruled out and the 3<sup>rd</sup> base coach will be ejected from the game.
21. **SCOREKEEPER, PITCH COUNTER, SCOREBOARD OPERATOR, & FIELD MAINTENANCE:**
  - a. The home team shall be responsible for making sure the field is prepared before each game (marking the field ((NO chalk on grass)), lightly watering, etc.)
  - b. The home team shall provide the official scorekeeper and the visiting team shall provide the scoreboard operator. After the game, the scorekeeper shall have both Managers and Umpires sign the scorebook.
  - c. Both teams are responsible for picking up the trash in their respective dugouts.
  - d. The visiting team is responsible for raking and watering the field after the game.
22. **INJURY REPORT:** An injury report must be filled out immediately for every injury, no matter how minor. Forms can be found in the concession area or ask the Board Member on Duty. The incident must be reported to the league Safety Manager within 24 hours of the injury.
23. **END OF SEASON PLAYOFFS:** Playoffs will be determined by the League VP.
24. **TOURNAMENT "BLUE-GREY" TEAMS:** Blue-Grey teams may be selected according to SLLL rules.