

Tosa-MKE Little League Machine Pitch Division Regular Season Playing Rules for 2023

Length of Game. A game lasts a maximum of 1 hour and 15 minutes. A new inning shall

not be started after one hour and 5 minutes **from the scheduled start time**. No extra innings will be played. If an inning is not complete when the one hour and 15-minute time limit is hit, the game will revert back to the previous completed inning as the completed score.

2. Forfeiture of Game. Teams must start with 8 players for a legal game, or the game will be forfeited. There will be a 10-minute grace period until a forfeit will be called. In the case of a forfeit, a win will be awarded with a score of 6 – 0.

3. Warm-up. Warm-up time is provided for each team before the game. To allow for proper warm-up each player should arrive at least 20 minutes before a game. Once the game begins there will be no throwing of balls except on the playing field.

4. Defense and Playing Time. Teams will play with 4 infielders, 4 outfielders, a pitcher and a catcher, or a total of 10 players. A rover position is allowed, but the child must start in the outfield grass prior to the pitch being thrown and cannot enter the infield until after the pitch has crossed the plate. A pitcher position shall also be used and will be located within the “pitching circle” surrounding the pitching machine or within 4 feet of either side of the pitching machine when a pitching circle is not present. **The player can not be in front of the machine until the ball reaches home plate**. Each player is to play a minimum of 3 innings or half of the game. A player arriving late to the game is to play a minimum of half the remaining game. No player should sit the bench for a second inning until every player has sat for one inning, and no player shall sit the bench for two consecutive innings. Players must rotate positions within infield and outfield during the course of the year, with safety in mind. (Note: plan rotations knowing you will most likely play less than 6 innings at the start of the season.) If a thrown ball hits the machine, the ball will remain alive and in play and runners may advance at their own risk.

5. Batting. A continuous batting order shall be used, and for Machine Pitch, and whoever was on deck when the last out is **recorded will lead off the next game**, and this continues for regular season. NO EXCEPTIONS! Batting orders shall be exchanged prior to the game. A coach or parent will feed the machine when your team is at bat. **Starting June 3rd balls and strikes will be called by the coach feeding the machine**. No walks and no bunting are allowed.

If a hit ball strikes the pitching machine, the ball is dead, and the batter will be awarded first base and all runners advance one base. If a player arrives late, the manager shall place this player at the end of the line-up after the opposing coach and the umpire(s) are notified, and there is no penalty. In the event a team starts the game with 8 players, an out will be recorded for the 9th spot in the batting order for the entire game unless the 9th player arrives. If a player starts the game and when a child is injured, becomes ill, or must leave the game site after the start of the game, the team will skip over him/her when his/her time at bat comes up without penalty. If the player returns he/she is inserted into his/her original spot in the batting order.

Refer to rule 6.07 in the Little League Rule Book for details regarding batting out of turn. Each team shall provide a lineup to the opposing team prior to the start of the game.

6. On-Deck Hitters. On-deck hitters are not allowed to hold or swing a bat until it is their turn to bat; there are no on-deck circles. The only player that is allowed to hold a bat is the player up to bat. No practice swings until a player gets to the plate.

7. Pitching Machine. The home team for the first game of the day shall provide the machine for their game with the visiting team being the backup machine if there is a mechanical issue. The speed of the machine varies about 3 MPH, and speed is registered after pitched from the machine. The speed should be as follows: Starting Tosa-MKE Little League season: 36– 39 MPH, Starting June 3: 38 – 41 MPH. The pitching machine shall be set before the game starts and agreed upon by both managers. Adjustments of the machine shall not occur during an inning unless several (4 or more pitches) consecutive pitches are judged to be “Balls.” Place the machine in front of the mound, the leg must be touching the mound.

8. Run Limit. There will be a 5 run limit per inning. This rule is waived for the last inning or last bat when each team can have unlimited runs. It is the responsibility of the visiting team's coach to declare their last at bat, based on the amount of time remaining in the game. There is NO slaughter rule.

9. Team Assignments. The home team will occupy the 1st base bench, and the home team will supply two baseballs for the game. BOTH teams are required to enter the final score in TeamSnap. Teams should confirm the final score at the end of each game. Any dispute must be brought to the Division Coordinator.

10. Base Running. A base runner may leave the base when the baseball crosses the plate. Stealing is not allowed. If it has been determined that the player has left early, i.e. before the ball has crossed the plate, the play is immediately called dead. The offending player will head back to the original base. Players may take a “secondary” lead once it crosses the plate but may not advance to the next base until the ball is put in play by the batter.

Players must slide or attempt to get around a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to make the tag or be called out; player must slide feet first when attempting to advance a base and can slide head first when returning to a base. Once the ball is controlled by any player within the “pitching circle or within a reasonable distance 4 feet”, “time” can be asked for by that player. If the base runner is in between bases, then the base runner will stop at the base he/she is running to. If a play is made on a runner at a base and the infielder does not control the ball, the runner may advance to other bases at the runner’s risk.

Base runners are only allowed to take 1 extra base on error no matter how many errors. The idea behind this is to have the defense field the ball, make the throw to first base, and then get it back to the pitcher. We want to make sure the kids understand the sequence. We are not playing to win the game. We are playing to teach the kids baseball. June 3rd we will evaluate the progression of the kids and decide if we lift this or not.

11. Courtesy runner. If a catcher is on base with 2 outs a courtesy runner must be used for the catcher, and may be allowed with 1 out. The courtesy runner shall be the player who made the last out during the inning.

12. Bench/Dugout. A coach or adult must be in the dugout at all times when kids present during the game. NO EXCEPTIONS! Early in the season coaches can stand in the outfield or down foul lines to assist fielders. After June 3rd, No coaches on the field.

14. Zero Tolerance Policy. Little League Baseball and Tosa-MKE Little League have a zero tolerance policy. Unsportsmanlike behavior will not be tolerated. Each participant and fan should treat players on each team, coaches, umpires, and fans with respect.

15. Judgment Calls. Coaches, players and fans shall not argue with umpires regarding judgment calls. Only the manager is allowed to question the umpire rule interpretation or to get an explanation of a call she or he does not understand.

16. Equipment. All players must be properly equipped for practice and games in accordance with Little League rules. Helmets must stay on the player's head until the player reaches the team bench. A player throwing a helmet, bat, or equipment will receive a warning. If a second offense occurs during the game, the player will either be called out (if bat) or removed from the game (if helmet or equipment). All male catchers must wear an athletic supporter with a cup. Athletic supporters with cups and mouthguards are encouraged for all players. All bats must conform to Little League standards.

17. Park Safety and Field Clean-up. After each game, each team is responsible for cleaning up the ball field and their respective bench or dugout. All managers, coaches, players, and fans should abide by county park rule

18. Enforcement of Rules. Managers and coaches are expected to help enforce Tosa-MKE Little League playing rules to ensure the safety of players, coaches, and fans. In addition, an umpire or a Tosa-MKE Little League Board member has the right to ask any player, coach, or fan to leave the park. If the offending party refuses to leave the park, the umpire or Board member has the authority to suspend the game, and if necessary, call law enforcement authorities.

19. Miscellaneous. Rainouts may be rescheduled, but not guaranteed. For all other rules please refer to the Little League Rule Book.