

## **Sugar Land Little League Coach Pitch AAA DIVISION GROUND RULES**

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

**The Sugar Land Little League Coach Pitch AAA Division Ground Rules listed below are additional, modified, or detailed explanations of the “Playing Rules” for the Coach Pitch 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. The official time will be kept by the umpire crew and they will determine when time has expired. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**
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 7-run per inning rule is in effect, unlimited runs are allowed. Note: continuation scoring will not be allowed past 7 runs; if the batter hits the ball to score the 7<sup>th</sup> run the play will stop and the side is retired. The only way more than 7 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 2 minutes 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 before the scheduled game time, a second date will be set. If the 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 be the pitching coach. An adult coach must be in the dugout at all times. Coaching from the pitching coach must be kept to an absolute minimum. The pitching coach must stay on the mound and may not approach. If coaching from the pitching coach is excessive the umpire may call an interference/delay of game call and the batter will be out.
8. **PLAYERS:** Coach Pitch AAA division is for 7 and 8-year-old league-age players.
9. **POOL PLAYER USAGE– Regular Season Games**

To promote fair play, participation, and to prevent unnecessary forfeits while discouraging over-reliance on external players:

- If a team can field **8 or more rostered players** at the start of the game (or has at least 8 available throughout), **no pool players** are permitted. The team must play with its own rostered players only. (This encourages full team attendance and avoids stacking lineups.)

- A team short of players may use pool players **only** to reach a lineup of up to **8 players total** (including rostered and pool players). The maximum number of pool players allowed per game is **3**.
  - Example: If a team has 5 rostered players available, it may use up to 3 pool players to field 8 total.
  - If a team has 6 rostered players, it may use up to 2 pool players (to reach 8).
  - If a team has 7 rostered players, it may use up to 1 pool player.
  - If a team has 8 or more rostered players, zero pool players are allowed.
- Pool players will bat at the bottom of the lineup and are to play outfield positions only

10. BATS: Only bats with the USA Baseball stamp will be allowed.

11. 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. Batters are to keep one foot in the batter's box throughout their at-bat. If a batter refuses to take the batter's box, the umpire will issue a warning. After one warning the umpire will call a strike until the batter takes the box, or the batter is retired.

12. 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 position of catcher will not be considered applicable for the minimum play rule. 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]

13. DEFENSIVE FIELDERS:

- a. Infielders may not position themselves more than 5 feet from the baselines, not the grass line.
- 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 before 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 a facemask.
- d. Teams may play 10 players defensively. However, with 10 players, there shall be 4 outfielders who shall play no closer than 30 feet to the infield dirt.

14. 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. Only one base. There is no overthrow rule.

15. BASE RUNNERS: ***Steals are not allowed in Coach Pitch.*** Runners may not leave the base until the ball is hit. A runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit.

16. 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.

17. COACH PITCHER/PITCHING DISTANCE:

- a. The coach pitching must release the ball no closer than 35' from the tip of home plate.

- b. A coach pitcher is prohibited from coaching while in the pitching position, either physically, or verbally (one warning will be allowed. Two violations will result in immediate removal from the mound).
- c. Each batter shall receive a maximum of six (6) pitches or three (3) swinging strikes. If a batter hits a foul ball on the sixth pitch, he or she is allowed to continue batting until he or she either does not make contact with the ball or puts the ball in play. A strike is defined as a batter offering at a ball with a swing or check swing, and/or fouling a pitch. Everything else will be called a ball regardless of location. No walks are permitted.
- d. Players will not take first base if they are hit by a pitch. If hit by a pitch then that is one pitch against the total number of allowed pitches (6). If the player is hit by a pitch on the 6<sup>th</sup> pitch, then the batter is out.
- e. A batted ball hitting a coach pitcher is declared a dead ball and the batter will advance to first base. If in the umpire's judgment, a coach pitcher intentionally makes contact with a batted ball, the batter is out, and no runner can advance.

18. BUNTING: Bunting is NOT allowed.

19. PROTESTS: Only rule infraction protests will be allowed. All disputes must be settled within 5 minutes, by the Lead Umpire. The Manager may, with the 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. **ONLY THE COACH THAT ATTENDS THE PLATE MEETING IS PERMITTED TO PROTEST A CALL TO AN UMPIRE. JUDGMENT CALLS CAN NOT BE PROTESTED.**

20. 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.

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

22. SCOREKEEPER, 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 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.

23. All rules defined herein are derived from the Little League Green Book. Any rule not specifically defined in these local rules, the umpire will defer to Little League Green Book and all decisions will be final and will not be challenged.

24. 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.

25. END OF SEASON PLAYOFFS: Playoffs will be determined by the League VP.

26. TOURNAMENT "BLUE-GREY" TEAMS: Blue-Grey teams may be selected according to SLLL rules.