

Rep Rule Book: RQ2 - Approved Playing Rules of 8U/9U (Rookie Ball)

Updated for the 2023 baseball season

RQ2 APPROVED PLAYING RULES OF 8U/9U

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RQ2.1 REGULATIONS

All Rep Rules & Regulations pertaining to membership, territorial rights, registration, players signing, fees, insurance, classification, Rep Play-offs, and tournaments shall apply as stated in the current version of the Constitution of the OBA and Constitution and By-laws of the Rep Division as amended each year at the Annual Meeting.

The Approved Playing Rules of 9U apply to both 9U and 8U.

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RQ2.2 DIAMOND LAYOUT

- a. The pitching machine is placed directly in front of home plate at a distance of 44 ft.
- b. An 8 ft. diameter safety circle shall be marked off directly in front of home plate and its centre shall be 44 ft. from home plate. No player is permitted to enter the safety circle, which is considered a dead ball area. Enter means that any part of the body enters the safety circle.
- c. Electrical cord must run along or under the ground from the pitching machine to the electrical source. A ball that hits the cord outside of the safety circle shall remain live and in play.
- d. In addition to electrical pitching machines, Louisville Slugger UPM 45 Blue Flame Pitching Machines are approved for Rep 9U play. It is recommended that a radar gun be present to confirm the machine settings produce pitches at the speed contemplated by RQ2.3 f). Note: A tournament may use either electric or mechanical machines, but not both.

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RQ2.3 PLAYING RULES

- a. A team shall comprise of a minimum of 10 players and a maximum of 25 players, all signed to team rosters of the series and classification of the team entered. Each team must have at least 1 manager and/or 1 or more coaches signed to a team roster clearly marked manager or coach and who shall be responsible for that team.
- b. Each team shall have a catcher, a first baseman, a second baseman, a third baseman, a shortstop, a left fielder, a right fielder, 1 pitcher and 2 centre fielders in the line-up. A team may play as long as it has 9 players at the game. If it drops to 8 or few players at a game, then the game is forfeited to the other team.
- c. The pitcher must stand beside the pitching machine outside of the safety circle and behind the release point of the pitching machine. Lines shall be drawn from the release point to 4 ft. beyond the circle. The pitcher must have both feet on or within 4 feet behind the white line until the ball is released from the machine. Once the ball is released from the machine, the pitcher may move in front of the line, but may not move through the circle. The machine shall be 44 ft. from home plate. Only the pitcher may return a live ball to the operating coach with runners on base. The pitcher must wear a NOCSAE approved batting helmet with facemask and chinstrap attached as designed by the manufacturer and may not be removed until the play is complete. Penalty: Time will be called at the completion of the play and 1 base will be awarded from the position of the runners at the time the play was completed. Neither the pitcher nor any other player may in any way break the plane of the 8 foot diameter circle around the machine whether stepping on the circle line or reaching into the circle while in an attempt to field a ball. Play will be called dead and 1 base will be awarded. All other forced runners will move 1 base.
- d. Infielders can ask for time in the infield area. Time will be given at the umpire's discretion when continuous action from the play has stopped. **NOTE:** The ball does not have to go back to the pitcher before an infield may ask for time. Continuous action ends when the defense stops trying to field the baseball, and the offense stops trying to advance.

- e. **Updated** Until the ball is fed into the machine, outfielders shall position themselves at least 15 feet beyond the base paths, or on the outfield grass, whichever is closer.
- f. The pitching machine speeds cannot be altered except at the end of an inning. Any tampering with the machine speed by the coach feeding the machine shall result in the coach's immediate ejection. If the speed or the flight of the ball becomes erratic, it shall be corrected at the direction of the umpire. (This may be done at any time.) If the correction is done between innings, both teams will be notified by the umpire. Height can be adjusted at any time. Machine speed is a maximum of 40mph and a minimum of 35mph.
- g. All 8U/9U baseball games shall be 7 innings or until a winner is declared. The game ends immediately after the deciding run scores, except for a home run out of the playing field or where additional runs are scored through the awarding of bases by rule in which case all runs are counted up to the 7 run inning maximum. Five innings shall constitute an official game except that a winner is declared and the game declared official at any point that the opposing team is unable to win or tie the game.
- h. Each batter shall receive a maximum of 5 strikes as called by the umpire. The batter shall not be called out if the 5th strike is called a foul ball. If a ball crosses the plate over the batter's head or bounces into the dirt, the umpire will not count it as a strike unless the batter swings at the pitch.
- i. Batters cannot walk or bunt. (Bunts are automatic outs.)
- j. There shall be no passed balls or wild pitches.
- k. **Updated** Base Runners cannot leave the base until the batter makes contact with the ball. If an infraction occurs, the ball will be declared dead, the offending runner will be called out, and no other runners may advance. No stealing allowed.
- l. If a batted ball hits the pitching machine or any adult in the playing field, then the ball is declared dead and the batter is awarded first base with the corresponding move of any base runners who may be forced to move. The coach feeding the machine must not interfere with any play being made by the defensive team. Otherwise, the batter will be called out and the runners will be returned to their base of origin. In case of the third out the side is retired.
- m. When a thrown ball hits the pitching machine or the cord within the circle, then the ball is declared dead and each base runner (including the batter-runner) shall advance one base from the time the ball becomes dead.
- n. The plate umpire shall be behind the catcher. The second umpire is the traditional base umpire.
- o. The on deck batter, the batter and base runners must wear a prescribed protective helmet with flaps covering both ears. Chinstraps are mandatory and will be worn as designed by the manufacturer. Helmets may not be changed except after the inning has been completed, or the player has been retired or has crossed home plate.
- p. Shoes with metal cleats are prohibited.
- q. All catchers are required to wear a mask with throat protector, helmet, chest protector, shin guards, cup and cup type supporter during the game and during any warm-up, machine set-up, etc.
- r. In addition to wooden bats, metal bats shall be allowed in OBA play. Except with respect to diameter, these bats shall meet the dimensional requirements specified in the Official Rules of Baseball. The maximum diameter of the bat barrel may be 2 ¾.
- s. All players in uniform (Rep Rostered) must be put in a continuous batting order, with the bat person being the exception. If a player is removed from the game due to injury, illness or official ejection, the player's spot in the batting order shall be deleted. In the event a batter must be removed due to injury, official ejection, or has to leave for any reason during the time at bat, the next batter in the batting order shall come to bat assuming the pitch count at the time the batter is removed. If the batter becomes an out, such batter shall then take his/her regular turn at bat.
- t. A coach/manager may only communicate positive instructions to his/her players on the field.
- u. Up to 3 games may be played in 1 day.
- v. An inning will be 3 outs or a maximum of 7 runs.
- w. The infield fly rule does not apply.
- x. The coach operating the pitching machine is required to wear a baseball helmet. For the purposes of this rule a skull cap is considered a baseball helmet. **Penalty:** the team will be warned one time to wear a helmet and for second violation or refusal to wear the helmet, the coach will be ejected.
- y. The coach operating the pitching machine may instruct the batter before feeding the machine, but shall not instruct runners during the play. **Penalty:** the coach shall be warned. If the action continues, the coach will be removed from the game.
- z. Batters at 9U must drop the bat and not throw it (intentionally or unintentionally) upon hitting the ball. **Penalty,** each team shall be entitled to one warning per game. After the warning, any further offences by a team shall result in the batter being declared out, the ball being dead and runners returning to their bases. If, prior to the team's warning, a batter throws the bat resulting in an injury, the ball is dead and play shall be halted and the team will receive its warning. The player's at bat will continue. **NOTE:** The pitch will count as one of the batter's 5 strikes. If it is the 5th strike, the batter will be declared out.
- aa. Once time has been granted by the umpire, the ball is returned to the Offensive Coach within the pitching circle. At this time, the plate umpire should say "Play" to make the ball live. The defensive pitcher may ask the offensive coach for the ball so he/she can make an appeal by tagging the base or the runner and indicating to the umpire the runner missed the base/left early/etc. The offensive coach must give the ball to the defensive player when requested. As per the Official Rules of Baseball, appeals must be made while the ball is live on either the base that was missed by a runner or the runner – as long as the defense indicates clearly than an appeal is being made.

Any baseball approved for 11U play.

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