

7u & 8u Machine Pitch Divisions

NKB will follow NFHS rules unless otherwise specified below. Coaches are prohibited from agreeing on “special” rules at the beginning of the game.

1. Game Schedules

- a. The League game schedule, as published by the League, will be strictly adhered to. Coaches will not be allowed to reschedule games for any reason, unless authorized by, and handled by, the Division Director, Director of Fields & Scheduling, League Operations Manager or League President.
- b. Postponements
 - i. All games not completed due to weather or other situations must be reported to your division director within 24 hours.
- c. Scorekeeping
 - i. All games must be scored utilizing the Gamechanger app
 - ii. The home team will be considered the book of record, but it is highly encouraged that both teams score the game as this will help resolve discrepancies if needed.

2. Playing Time, Roster Batting & Defensive Positioning

- a. All players attending a game are required to play a minimum of six (6) outs in the field. The game official and opposing coach/manager must be notified prior to the start of the game of non-participation of a player due to injury or disciplinary reasons if said player is to be seated on the bench.
- b. If a player 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 injured/ill player returns he/she is merely inserted into their original spot in the batting order and the game continues. Also, if a child arrives late to a game site, if the manager chooses to enter him/her in the lineup, he/she would be added to the end of the current lineup.
- c. Roster Batting: A team’s entire roster will bat in order, throughout the entire game. There will be no maximum number of batters per inning. A half inning will end only when one of the following conditions is met:
 - i. Three outs are recorded.
 - ii. Seven runs are scored.
- d. Defensive players may be moved freely throughout a game.
- e. We will play with four outfielders (LF, LC, RC, RF). The fourth outfielder is not a roving outfielder.
- f. Outfielders are to stay a minimum of 20 feet behind the bases at the time of the pitch.

- g. Defensive coaches are not permitted on the field and should remain in the dugout area.
 - h. Coaches are highly encouraged to rotate players as much as possible to help their development, however due to player safety, players are not required to rotate defensive positions.
3. Team Coaches
- a. A maximum of one manager and three coaches are allowed in the dugout.
4. Safety
- a. All players should remain in the dugout when not in the game.
 - i. Players (except defensive players in positions) are not permitted to be on the field of play without a batting helmet on.
 - b. Any player who throws his bat will be warned and he must be called out for any subsequent offenses.
 - i. This call can be made by the coach of either team.
 - c. All male players should wear a protective cup.
 - d. All catchers are REQUIRED to wear a protective cup.
 - e. Cleats – Rubber or molded cleats must be worn. Metal cleats are not allowed.
 - f. On Deck Batters
 - i. One on deck batter is permitted.
 - ii. This on deck batter can be placed on either side of the field for safety reasons.
 - iii. On deck batters must be reminded to stay clear of the field of play until the preceding at bat has been fully completed to ensure they do not interfere with a live ball in play.
5. Players
- a. A player may “play up” a maximum of one year from his/her league age, which is the players’ age as of May 1st. To illustrate, a player with a league age of 9 may play on a 10U team; however, that player is not allowed to play on an 11U team or higher. Pitching limits will be based on the player’s league age, not actual age.
 - b. A team must consist of a minimum of eight (8) players in order to start a game. Teams not having at least eight (8) players at the start of a game will forfeit the game. Forfeit time is fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled start of a game. A game may NOT begin until both teams have at least eight (8) players present.
 - c. If a team is not going to have the minimum number of players for a game, then the team is allowed to pick up players to fill in during that game up to a total of 9 available players. A substitute player cannot be on another team in your same division or any division higher than your team participates. For example, if you are in the Majors division then your fill in player must come from the Minors division or the age group directly below your age division. If you are in the Minors division then your substitute player must come from the division directly below your age division. A substitute player is NOT allowed to pitch for your team. All substitute players MUST be a current NKB registered/paid player. They don't have to be on your roster; however, they must be on a current NKB

roster. If a team uses a substitute player and does not abide by the established rules, then the team will forfeit that game, and the head coach will be subject to suspension.

6. Official Game

- a. Games will be 6 innings.
- b. An official game will consist of at least 3 ½ innings, where the home team is leading at the conclusion of 3 ½ innings of play, or 4 innings if the visiting team is leading at the end of 3 ½ innings, and the home team is given their at-bats in the fourth inning. An official game can be called in this manner if rain forces the end to a game.
- c. Regular season games that are tied after 6 innings have been played, or that are suspended (due to bad weather) are considered complete and end in a tie.
- d. If a game is called before it has become a regulation game, but after one (1) or more innings have been played, it shall be resumed exactly where it left off. If less than one (1) inning is played, the game is started over from the beginning.

7. Run Rule and Time Limit

- a. If after 4 innings of play a team is ahead by 15 or more runs, the game is complete. If after 5 innings of play a team is ahead by 8 or more runs, the game is complete.
- b. A new inning will not be played after 1 hour 30 minutes. The official start of the next inning is the time at which the last out of the previous inning was recorded.

8. Time between innings

- a. Both teams are expected to be ready for the start of the next half-inning within 3 minutes of the previous half-inning ending.
- b. This time should be monitored and adhered to as closely as possible.
 - i. See rules on courtesy runners and player safety.

9. Safe/Out Calls

- a. Base coaches will call safe/out at first base and third base.
- b. The coach running the pitching machine will call safe/out at second base and home plate.
 - i. This is the honor system and games should be called fair. Any perceived favoritism should be reported to the division director.

10. Field Layout

Division	Pitching Distance (front of machine to tip of plate)	Base Distance	Distance Home to 2nd
7u & 8u	46'	60'	84'10"

11. Pitching Machines

- a. 8u Division
 - i. 9-Power Level
 - ii. 4-Release Block
 - iii. 3-Micro Adjust

- b. 7u Division
 - i. 7-Power Level
 - ii. 4-Release Block
 - iii. 3-Micro Adjust
- c. A coach for the batting team will operate the pitching machine.
 - i. This coach can only coach the batter and is prohibited from coaching base runners.
 - 1. The first occurrence of this is a warning, while subsequent occurrences require this coach to be removed from the field for the remainder of the game.
 - 2. The opposing manager is the umpire in this situation, and we will not have any controversy on the field.
 - ii. The coach must get down and out of the way or they will cause the offensive team to receive an out.
 - 1. The first occurrence is a warning, while any subsequent occurrences require this coach to be removed from the field for the remainder of the game.
 - 2. The opposing manager is the umpire in this situation, and we will not have any controversy on the field.
- d. Machines are to be regulated by the coaches to ensure the children have good experiences at the plate. The spring-loaded machines require cooperation between the coaches to ensure proper performance in the games.
- e. The machine should be set by the home team before the game starts. Coaches may use the micro-adjust setting during an at bat to make the pitch hittable. Any other adjustments to the machine must be agreed upon by both coaches.
- f. A batted ball that hits the machine or the coach feeding the machine is considered an immediate dead ball. If either of these situations occur, the batter is awarded first base and all other base runners remain on their base (at time of pitch) unless they are forced to advance by the batter/runner.
- g. The player occupying the “pitcher” defensive position must remain beside the machine (on either side) until the ball is pitched.

12. Bats

- a. Bats shall not be more than thirty-three (33) inches in length and not more than 2 3/4 inches in diameter.
- b. Bats must be stamped with either BPF 1.15 or with the USA Bat logo.
- c. Any bats listed on the current year’s USSSA “Withdrawn and/or Non-Compliant Baseball Bat Models” listing are not allowed.
- d. Illegal Bats
 - i. If the illegal bat is discovered prior to a batter completing his "at bat" the bat is simply removed from play and the "at bat" continues.
 - ii. A player who uses an illegal bat or non-conforming barrel dimension and hits a fair ball will be ruled out. No advancement on the bases will be allowed, and any outs during the play shall stand. This is an appeal play.
 - iii. The "at bat" will be considered legal once a pitch is thrown to the next batter.

- iv. Any bat discovered prior to the game that does not conform to the above rule shall be directed to be removed immediately and not be allowed for use during the game.
- v. If an illegal bat is discovered during the course of the game, the team shall also receive a warning. If a second illegal bat is discovered on the same team, the player using the bat as well as the head coach of that team will be ejected from the game.

13. Base-running

- a. Base runners may only steal second or third base for each batter and only after the batter has one strike. The runner may not advance on an overthrow by the catcher on a steal attempt.
- b. Base runners on first or second may only advance on an overthrow from the catcher to the pitcher if they have not already stolen a base during the current at bat.
- c. Leaving a base before a pitched ball has crossed home plate is not allowed. If a runner leaves the base early, and reaches the next base safely, the runner will be returned to his/her original base, and all other runners will be required to return to their original base as well. If, however, the runner is thrown out by the catcher on the play, the runner will be called out, and all other runners will be required to return to their original base. This is NOT an appeal play.
 - i. When an umpire sees this infraction, a warning will be issued by the umpire to the coach. Where a base runner is returned to his/her original base, and subsequently leaves the base early again, the umpire will declare the base runner out and return all other base runners to their respective bases.
- d. Base runners on third base are not permitted to steal home on passed balls. However, if the catcher attempts to pick them off, the runner is allowed to score.
- e. Base runners may advance until one of the following occurs:
 - i. The lead runner stops his forward movement toward the next base.
 - ii. The ball is in the possession of a fielder ahead of the runner.
 - iii. No defensive play is imminent.
- f. In the event of an overthrow from a fielder (other than the catcher on a steal attempt), a base runner may advance one base at his own risk.
- g. When sliding, all base runners must slide feet first, when advancing to a base. Headfirst slides are not allowed. Players who violate this rule should be given a warning and any subsequent violations should result in the player being called out.
- h. Courtesy runners are optional at any time for the catcher. The courtesy runner shall be the last batted out. The catcher for this rule is the catcher of the previous inning. If this situation arises in the first inning and no outs have been recorded, the catcher shall remain on the bases until an out is recorded. When there are 2 outs, a courtesy runner is mandatory for the catcher to allow him to get ready and keep up the pace of play.
- i. CONTACT RULE (ALL DIVISIONS) - If a runner attempting to reach a base intentionally and/or maliciously runs into a defensive player, the base runner will be called out on the play and ejected from the game. Defensive players are

reminded that unless a play is being attempted, the batter/runner has the right to the base path and any attempt to impede the batter/runner or drawing unnecessary contact will be deemed obstruction. Repeated violations by the defense will be deemed unsportsmanlike behavior and the player is subject to ejection. This is a judgment call by the umpire. There is no "slide rule".

14. Walks

- a. There are no intentional or unintentional walks.

15. Uncaught Third Strikes & Infield Fly Rule

- a. On an uncaught third strike, the batter is out.
- b. The infield fly rule is not in effect.

16. Bunting

- a. Bunting is not allowed.

17. Sportsmanship

- a. Players, coaches and/or spectators are not allowed to bait or taunt and are required to always show good sportsmanship.
- b. Failure to maintain a high level of sportsmanship is to result in ejection from the game.
- c. Encouragement for your own team is to be the focus of all concerned with the game.

18. Code of Conduct

- a. All individuals involved (players, coaches, spectators) should show respect for all of our umpires, players, coaches and spectators.
- b. Abuse of umpires in any form, verbal or physical, will not be tolerated by NKB. Individuals found to be abusive to the umpires, whether it is coaches, players, or spectators, will be asked to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner. Where the abuse continues, the offending individual will be asked to leave the area surrounding the ball field.
- c. During the game, if a conversation with an umpire is necessary regarding a disputed call – these must be handled by the Head Coach exclusively in a quiet and professional manner.
- d. Individuals and/or teams who commit egregious and/or repeated violations will be subject to suspension or removal from the league.

19. Weather & Darkness

- a. Relating to weather, the goals of NKB are:
 - i. Safety of all participants and spectators first and foremost
 - ii. Attempt to “complete” games when possible
- b. With the above goals in mind, the following guidelines should be observed for all games:
 - i. Before the game begins, the coaches may discuss and decide if conditions are suitable for the game to commence. The coach of the home team is responsible for the final decision. Once the game has begun, the umpire is responsible for all decisions pertaining to suspension, resumption and/or cancellation.
 - ii. At the FIRST incident of lightning OR thunder (REGARDLESS of how far away it seems), all persons will immediately clear the field and seek safe shelter, and the game will be suspended. Scorebooks should note

inning, outs, count on batter, and time. The Managers/Coaches and umpire shall decide whether the remainder of the game will be cancelled OR if a 30-minute delay will be observed. (Safe shelter is a building or vehicle preferably)

- iii. The 30 minute waiting period can be observed if it is likely that threatening conditions will dissipate.
- iv. The 30 minute clock resets with each occurrence of thunder or lighting.
- v. During the delay players are strictly forbidden from any activity and must remain in safe shelter area.