

## **2011 NIAGARA SOUTH MOSQUITO DIVISION PLAYING RULES AND REGULATIONS**

1. Each team will field nine players as in traditional baseball.
2. All players present at the game will be placed in a consecutive batting order to be followed for the entire game. If a player must be removed from the lineup due to injury or other reason then all following players will simply advance up the batting order.
3. Players may be called up from a house league Rookie Ball team to allow a team to field a sufficient roster. All players called up must become part of the roster for the game and they must be played the same as everyone else during the game. Players may NOT be used from another Mosquito house league or Rep team.
4. Teams may use an unlimited substitution rule for all defensive positions.
5. A team will have a fifteen (15) minute grace period from the scheduled start time to field a team of no fewer than eight (8) players. If a team is unable to field a team of eight (8) players, the game will be defaulted to the opposing team and a final score of 7 to 0 will be recorded. However, the team with fewer than eight (8) players will borrow players from the opposing team and an exhibition game will be declared and played. If a team's numbers drop to below 9 during the game then the game will continue to completion.
6. All players must wear a helmet (with 2 ear covers and chin strap) when batting and when running the bases.
7. Bases will be set at 65 feet apart.
8. The pitching machine will be set at 44 feet from home plate and will be set to a speed of not less than 35 mph and not more than 40 mph. The speed of the pitching machine is to be agreed upon before the game starts. If there is not an agreement, the umpire will make the decision. The machine may be adjusted for pitch location however the speed is not to be changed once set at the beginning of the game. The umpire is to make any speed adjustments during the game. Anyone caught tampering with the machine will be ejected from the game.
9. The umpire will signal the machine operator to start each batter's turn by saying "play ball" when everyone is ready. 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 wear a regulation batting helmet with an attached chinstrap. The pitcher must have both feet on the white line until the ball is released from the machine. Only the pitcher may return a live ball back to the pitching machine operator. The pitching machine operator shall not interfere with the play in any manner. The pitcher must not in any way break the plane of the 8 foot diameter circle around the machine whether stepping on the circle line or reaching in. Play will be called dead and 1 base will be awarded. All other forced runners will move 1 base. This only applies if the pitcher makes contact with the ball. If a batted ball goes through the pitching circle without touching anything, it is a live ball. The batter and any runners, advance at their own risk.

10. Batters will be given three strikes to hit the ball. A strike can be a swinging strike, a foul ball, or a called strike. The umpire will determine if a pitch is outside the strike zone and not hittable. Questioning an umpire's judgment on this has the same penalty as arguing the strike zone. It is immediate ejection from the game. There will be NO walks. A dropped third strike will be recorded as an out. As in regular baseball rules, 3rd strike foul ball, IS NOT AN OUT. The batter shall receive additional pitches until called 3<sup>rd</sup> strike occurs. A player hit by a pitch will continue to hit, if able. If the player is unable to continue, the next batter will proceed on a new strike count without an out being charged.
11. If the umpire rules that a batter attempted to bunt, the batter will be declared out and the base runners cannot advance.
12. Batted balls that hit the machine or the feeder will be declared dead balls and the batter will be awarded first base. All other runners will advance one base, but only if forced to do so.
13. Runners must remain in contact with the base until the ball crosses the plate. Infractions of this rule will result in one warning by the umpire. Subsequent infractions will cause the runner to be called out. Runners may advance to second or third base on passed balls or strikeouts, but are not permitted to score on such plays. *Exception: A runner may score from third base if a play is made on that runner or any other runner at any base. (i.e. Player stealing second base and catcher throws to second, runner from third base may attempt to score)*
14. Runners may not advance when the pitcher has control of the ball in the pitching circle area, or if the ball has come to rest within the pitching circle. A runner may attempt to advance when the ball is being returned to the pitcher by an infielder (other than the catcher) or an outfielder. A runner attempting to advance may be tagged out by a fielder. The umpire will determine if the base runner has passed the halfway point to the next base prior to the pitcher having control of the ball in the pitching circle area, in which case the runner will be awarded the base. When runners are holding at their bases and a ball is being returned by the catcher to the pitcher, the ball is considered "dead", and the runners may not advance. If a runner has already started advancing to the next base when the ball has crossed the plate or has been dropped by the catcher, the runner may continue even though the catcher chooses to return the ball to the pitcher, rather than attempting to make a play on the runner. If the pitcher chooses to leave the pitching circle area prior to having the ball and becomes involved in a play at a base, that player is no longer considered to be a pitcher, and normal rules of play will be in force. Coaches should make no attempt to catch the ball or interfere with the play, but should wait to receive the ball from the pitcher.
15. If the scheduled catcher is on base when the second out is made the catcher will have a courtesy runner to speed up play. The courtesy runner will be the last player called out.

16. A team's at bat shall consist of 3 outs, 5 runs, or a maximum of ten batters. A team trailing by more than 5 runs in any inning may score enough runs to catch up to, but not go ahead of, the other team. The 3 outs and 10 batters rule still applies. The offensive team must notify the umpire and the defensive team when the tenth batter comes up. If there are 2 out when the 10<sup>th</sup> batter is up, the 3<sup>rd</sup> out can be obtained by a caught fly ball, a force out or a tag play. In all other instances, the ball must go to the catcher who must touch the plate to end the inning. With less than 2 outs, if the 10<sup>th</sup> batter is put out on a caught fly ball, all base runners are permitted to score, provided they are tagging up to a base when the ball is caught. Regardless of the number of outs, if the 10<sup>th</sup> batter strikes out, the side is retired. Only 5 runs are to be counted per inning. If a play is in progress when the 5<sup>th</sup> run scores, and then more runs score, the inning is over and only the 5 runs are counted.
17. The infield fly rule will **NOT** be in effect.
18. All games will be a maximum of 7 innings in length, or a time limit of 1 1/2 hours. All games begin at the scheduled start time unless they are delayed by a previous game, or by the umpires arriving late. In these cases, time begins with the first pitch. The curfew time should be noted by the umpires and announced to both teams at the beginning of the game. No new innings may be started after 1 1/2 hours or the stated curfew time. An inning in progress may be completed after the curfew time has been reached, if necessary. There is no mercy rule per inning or per number of innings. Last inning is not called. It is an official game after four (4) innings of play.
19. Games may be stopped prior to completing seven full innings if field conditions do not permit continuation of the game (darkness, weather etc.). The relative field conditions will be at the discretion of the umpires.