



TPLL 2020 Rookie Minor Rules

1. **Home Team and Field Set-Up.** Field setup (such as lining the field) should be performed by TPLL's field setup crew before each game. The home team is responsible for setting up the field (pitching machine, dragging the field, and anything not performed by the field setup crew) before the game as necessary, and dragging the field after the game. It is suggested that the home team coaching staff arrive an hour before the game in order to set up the pitching machine and prep the field. This takes about 15 minutes and leaves plenty of time to warm-up your team.
2. **Clean up.** Both teams are responsible for cleanup of the field, dugouts and respective fan stands. Our continued access and use of all fields is contingent on our collective ability to maintain them in nice order.
3. **Dugouts.** The home team gets the 1st base dugout. The home team also supplies the game balls.
4. **Pitching Machine.** The ball machine is to be placed in front of the mound in front of the area where a little pitcher would step to complete a pitch, about 12 inches in front of the rubber. The placement is required to ensure that the machine posts do not chew up the mound. Coaches should agree on the angle and speed of the ball machine prior to the game. An umpire (or coaches, if an umpire agrees) will be allowed to adjust the machine up/down and left/right during an inning so that pitches cross the plate. The speed of the machine should not be changed during the game unless both coaches consent. No changes should occur during an inning unless the speed of the machine has increased due to the vibrations of the machine. Only JUGGS Pearl Balls should be used in the pitching machine. Please make sure that other brands of balls are NOT used. The home team is to supply the JUGGS balls for games.

5. **Pitcher.** The “pitcher” should be an umpire. He will feed the machine and keep track of the pitch count per batter, which is limited to 7 pitches (see Rule 14 below). The pitcher is responsible for fielding any throws from the defensive team to him on or near the mound that would result in the desired stopping of a play, as described in Rule 10 below. Coaches should stay off the field of play except in the customary first base and third base coaching positions (in foul territory).
6. **Game Time Limit.** Games are 90 minutes or 6 innings, whichever is shorter. A new inning begins as soon as the 3rd out is recorded at the end of the prior inning. A new inning MUST be started if 90 minutes have not expired, even if 89 minutes have passed and the inning cannot be completed within the 90 minute limit. Once an inning is started, it will be played to completion, regardless of time, unless the home team is ahead after the visitor has completed their at bat and time has expired. There are no extra innings played, other than in the playoffs. Games may end in ties in the regular season.
7. **Lineups.** All players on the team should be included on the batting lineup and bat regardless of whether or not they were in the field. For example, if a team has 13 players with 11 playing in the field and 2 on the bench in an inning, then all 13 players must be in the batting order all game. The batting order may not be changed during the game except for injury. If a player is injured, he is removed from the line-up at no penalty. That player may re-enter the game if he feels better, and at the coach’s discretion, and be re-inserted into his same spot in the batting order. A player that arrives after the game has begun must be added to the last spot on the lineup.
8. **Batting Limitation.** A team is limited to batting through the batting order once per inning. Thus, a team may not send to the plate any player more than once in an inning, even if three outs have not been made. A team may bat entirely through the order to the last batter of the inning in the event that three outs do not occur sooner (and subject to the five run limitation in Rule 9 below). This rule applies whether or not the teams have an equal number of players. For example, if one team has 9 players and the other team has 11 players, the last batter of the first team will be the 9th batter in the inning and the last batter for the other team will be the 11th batter in the inning unless three outs are made (or five runs scored) before the last batter. That means that if a team with 11 players comes to bat in the bottom of the 6th inning and is losing 15-3, the most runs that team can score is 11 and it is not possible for the team to tie or win. In a situation as in this example, the team will still bat until the conclusion of the inning. Additional considerations include:

- a. With the last batter, the play ends when any of the conditions in Rule 10 occurs. If play is stopped as a result of the pitcher having possession of the ball or being thrown a catchable ball (i.e., the play ends under Rule 10(d) or (e)), then a runner who has advanced at least halfway to home at the time the pitcher gains possession will score (unless five runs have already scored that inning).
 - b. The manager of the team at bat must notify the opponent that the current batter is the last batter of the inning. If the team at bat fails to notify the opponent of “last batter” status, one of two things will occur. If the batter strikes out or is put out, the play stands and the inning is over. In that case, no runs may score. If the batter gets a hit of any kind, he is credited only with a single. No runs may score unless the last batter was at bat with the bases loaded, in which case only one run will score. (In other words, even if the undeclared last batter hits a grand slam, only one run will count).
9. **Five Run Rule.** No team may score more than five runs in an inning except the 6th inning. This does not apply to the ‘last inning’ in the event the 90 minute game limit will prevent a 6th inning from being played (i.e., in innings 1-5 there is always a five-run limit even if that inning turns out to be the final one played). When a team scores its fifth run in an inning, the inning is immediately over (even if more runs would have scored on a play, only the first five runs will count each inning). However, the five run rule does not apply in the 6th inning (all other innings have the five-run limit with no exceptions). In the 6th inning, teams may score as many runs as they have batters, or until the third out is recorded.
10. **Play Ends.** Every play ends when:
- a. a third out is made,
 - b. when no further play is possible,
 - c. when any defensive player has secure possession of the ball and is standing on home plate ,
 - d. the “pitcher” has possession of the ball on any part of the pitching mound, or
 - e. even if the “pitcher” does not catch the ball thrown to him, the play ends when the fielding team throws the ball to the pitcher to stop the play if the umpire at pitcher position determines that it was a catchable ball. Pitchers must make every reasonable effort to field a throw to

them from the fielding team. If for any reason the pitcher is distracted when the ball is thrown to him/her then play is dead when if the umpire determines the throw was catchable (for example, it hits the pitcher's glove or the throw crosses the plane of the pitcher's mound). In other words, the ability or inability of the pitcher to make a catch should have no bearing on the game.

- i. If the throw is intended for the pitcher and is offline but still deemed catchable (as determined in the judgment of the umpire), then the play is still dead when it crosses the area of the mound.
- ii. If the throw is intended for the pitcher and is not catchable (as determined in the judgment of the umpire), then the overthrow rule applies. (See section 16 below.)
- iii. If the throw is intended for another fielder (as determined in the judgment of the umpire), the ball remains live.

If play is stopped as a result of the pitcher having possession of the ball then a runner who has advanced at least halfway to home at the time the pitcher gains possession will score (unless five runs have already scored that inning). If any runner has advanced at least halfway to any other base before the play ends, that runner will proceed to the next base. If any runner is less than halfway to the next base when the play ends, then that runner shall return to the base from which the runner started.

11. **Infield Positions.** Fielding team may use a maximum of **6 infielders** (catcher, 1B, 2B, SS, 3B, and a rover positioned between SS and 2B, in front of the actual second base). No fielder may play at the pitcher's mound, (this is a safety issue given the location of the pitching machine). Due to the defensive restrictions caused by the use of the pitching machine, bunts are not allowed. **All players should be given a minimum of two innings in the infield per game for all games, including the playoffs.**
12. **Outfield Positions.** The team in the field may use up to **4 outfielders**. All outfielders **must be positioned on the outfield grass at the time the ball is hit and cannot be used to cover a base (i.e., they can only cover overthrows of a base)**. At Grenada field (where there is a large infield), outfielders may play in from the grass provided that they remain a reasonable distance behind the infielders).

A maximum of 10 players may be used defensively at a time, based on our belief that it is better to have the players out in the field rather than on the bench. If a

team has more than 10 players then every effort should be made to allow all players equal fielding time. No player should sit more than one inning.

13. **Base Running.** There are no lead-offs or base stealing; runners may not advance until the batter makes contact. Runners may slide (feet first only!), and are encouraged/required to do so when a defensive player is in position to make an out at the approaching base, (other than at first base, of course). Runners cannot 'charge' the catcher at the plate under any circumstances. If the runner runs into the catcher without sliding, the runner will be called out. **If there are two outs and your catcher is on base, you may pinch run for him to keep the game moving.**

14. **Walks/Strikeouts and Pitch Limit.** There are no walks and no called strikes. There is a 7 pitch per player, per at bat limit. If a player fails to put a ball in play within 7 pitches, he/she shall be recorded as an out, and the next batter should come to bat. If, however, the umpire determines that the 7th pitch is unhittable, then the umpire shall allow the batter another pitch. If the 8th pitch or any subsequent pitch is still unhittable, the umpire shall allow another pitch.
 - a. At any time if the pitching machine is out of alignment (not consistently throwing strikes), the umpire shall suspend play and have the coaches align the machine properly. If this occurs during the middle of an at-bat, then the batter resumes the at-bat with the same strike-count and pitch-count that existed before play was suspended.
 - b. A player only gets a strike if he swings and misses, or fouls the ball (i.e., no called strikes on a take). Otherwise, usual baseball rules apply: foul balls do not count for strike three unless caught. Additionally, a player can strike out swinging if the player has failed to swing **at least three times within a span of 7 pitches.**

15. **Balls Hitting Pitching Machine.** A batted ball that hits the pitching machine is a dead ball, with the batter being credited with a single and each runner awarded one base.

16. **Overthrows.** Overthrows to first base will result in players advancing no more than one base past the initial base they were running to at the start of the play (batter goes to 2nd, runner on 1st goes to 3rd, runner on 2nd scores. This is defined as "One Base"). All overthrows that enter the playground area result in a dead ball and runners advance One Base. However, if an overthrow does not enter the playground area, then the runner advances at his/her own risk to

second base but that is as far as they can go on the overthrow. Other runners are also limited to One Base. On overthrows to bases other than 1st runners may advance as far as they would like as long as an umpire has not ruled it a dead ball (but if it is ruled a dead ball, then the runners are awarded One Base).

17. **Players/Coaches On the Field of Play.** When on offense, the only players on the field of play should be the batter and any base runners. All other batters should be in the dugout **without** a bat in hand. The only player with a bat should be the batter at the plate. There is no on-deck circle. All equipment needs to be in the dugout. There are two offensive coaches and two defensive coaches allowed on the field during the game.

a. Offensive Coaches allowed outside the dugout:

- i. 1st base coach
- ii. 3rd base coach

b. Defensive Coaches allowed outside the dugout:

- i. Coach behind the plate at the backstop to field the many balls that pass the catcher during the game (to speed up play)
- ii. Coach near dugout to verbally assist players with positioning

Coaches should not stop overthrown balls at any base or otherwise interfere with a live play. Other than the umpires, no other non-players should be on the field of play. It is the coach's responsibility to make sure that parents follow this rule.

The offensive team needs to have an adult in the dugout managing the batting lineup and behavior of the kids in the dugout (everyone in the dugout, no climbing the fences or throwing things around). This coach should also get the catcher ready for the next inning. This will speed play and improve safety. **If there are only three coaches available for the game, a player wearing a helmet should serve as a base coach and one coach should be in the dugout.**

18. **Umpires.** We use youth umpires for most games. Coaches should introduce themselves at a pre-game meeting at home plate and get to know the Umpires by first name. (Umpires are instructed to do the same, but some kids may be a bit intimidated). At all times, it is essential that coaches, assistant coaches and parents refrain from any and all criticism. These kids are learning as well. They will make bad calls or mistakes occasionally, though overall they do an excellent job. If you believe there has been an error in enforcing a rule

(but not on an issue of judgment, such as whether a runner was put out), you may approach the umpire, and have an appropriately toned discussion. Have familiarity with these rules (or have a rule book in hand). Again, at no time may a coach, player or parent challenge a judgment call. Instant replay is not in our budget (!). Please help police your parents as well. Our youth umpires deserve our very best behavior and respect.

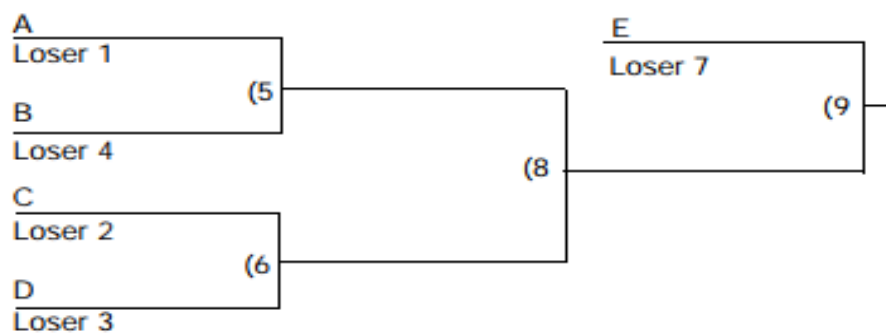
19. **Score Keeping.** Each team needs to designate a scorekeeper to keep track of the runs scored for each team. Score keepers should use GameChanger. The scorekeepers should confer at the end of every half inning or sooner if one believes the 5-run rule has been met.
20. **Playoff Games.** All playoff games will go to six innings or until a winner is determined, whichever is longer, (extra innings if needed). If a playoff game cannot be completed, (e.g. because of darkness or the start of the minor league game), then the game will be completed at a subsequent date from the point that the game was stopped, (i.e. top of the 5th inning, two outs, runner on 2nd), and will NOT revert back to the last complete inning.
21. **Playoffs.** Each of the 6 RM teams will make the playoffs and will be a double elimination (with an exception noted below). The #1 and #2 seeded teams will receive a first round bye. The exception to the double elimination is that if the team that emerges from the Winners' Bracket reaches the championship game without having lost a game--and they lose the championship game, that team will be eliminated without an opportunity for a 2nd loss. Here's what the bracket will look like:

6 Team Double Elimination Bracket

Winners' Bracket



Losers' Bracket



22. **Outside Coaches.** Coaches are allowed to secure supplemental outside coaching for their respective team. The standard is a “reasonable amount” of supplemental coaching
23. **Game Results.** Please email game results to the Commissioner, Howard Ting at howardting@gmail.com as soon as you are able following the games.
24. **Field Issues.** Text or call Howard at 415.305.5580

25. **Other Issues.** Text or call Howard at 415.305.5580