

Pinelands Slugger Rules

1. GOALS:

Provide a positive and fun environment to execute the fundamentals of baseball and good sportsmanship are the primary goals of Pinelands Slugger League.

2. GAME SCHEDULING:

- a. Games are scheduled for six (6) innings in length. However, no new inning may begin once ninety (90) minutes has elapsed from the start of a game.
- b. A game is official after three (3) innings of play.
- c. Games are to start promptly at their scheduled time (see imaasports.org website for game dates/times).
- d. Teams may start a game with less than their full roster of players.
- e. Game cancellation/rescheduling requests must be made by the team's head coach, and approved by the IMAA Slugger director at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled start of the game.
- f. Cancellation of games due to inclement weather will be determined and communicated by the IMAA Slugger Director via the imaasports.org website.
- g. Games will automatically end at the 1st flash of lightning.
 - ◇ If game has gone at least three (3) full innings then team leading after last full inning is winner (if the teams are tied after 3 innings, then game will end in a tie). If less than three innings have transpired, then game will be rescheduled and resume at the point in game where it was stopped.

3. FIELD PREPARATION:

- a. Home team (see imaasports.org website for home/away team assignments) is responsible for preparing the field (e.g., placing the bases on the field, raking home plate, bases, pitcher areas, lining the field, spring-loaded pitching machine), as well as for supplying game balls.
- b. Bases, rakes, spring-loaded pitching machine, et al are kept in the Slugger storage shed - please see IMAA Slugger Director for shed's lock combination.
- c. Home Team will utilize the bench on the 1st Base side of the field; Visiting Team will utilize the bench on the 3rd Base side of the field.
- d. Field dimensions used shall be a 46/60 configuration. (8U tournament size)

4. PRE-GAME WARMUPS

- a. Coaches and players are requested to be at the field 30 minutes prior to schedule start of game at which time pre-game warm-ups will take place and consist of:
 - ◇ Light stretching/running
 - ◇ Fielding/throwing/batting stations

5. UMPIRES

- a. The head coaches of each team will collectively identify at least one umpire for the game (you may want to rotate and have a "fielding team's " coach be the umpire when the other team is batting and vice versa).

6. BATTING:

- a. The following are suggested coaches to have while batting (have parents help when shorthanded):
 - ◇ Batting Coach - at on-deck area instructing the batter.
 - ◇ Bench Coach - an bench keeping players aware of when they will bat,
 - ◇ First and Third Base coaches - and the respective base sidelines helping the base
 - ◇ runners negotiate the bases.
- b. All players are to bat in set rotation, whether playing the field or not.
- c. The inning will come to an end when either three (3) outs are made or five (5) runs are scored.
- d. However, in inning 6, a team may score as many runs as they are able to do within one rotation of their lineup (rotation sizes must be equal for each team - e.g., if one team has 9 players and the other team has 10 players, then the rotation size will be 10).
- e. It is encouraged that a Team's batting order be rotated from one game to the next to afford multiple players the opportunity to bat in different spots in the lineup.
- f. All batters, on-deck personnel waiting to hit, and base runners must wear batting helmets.
- g. Keep on-deck batters behind the backstop, out of the field of play.
- h. On-deck batters cannot enter the field until play ceases
- i. For innings 1 and 2, players will pitch.
 - ◇ There will be a plate umpire who calls balls and strikes.
 - ◇ Three (3) swinging strikes will be an out with foul tips included (but last strike cannot be a foul).
 - ◇ Four (4) balls will be a walk.

- j. For innings 3 through 6, the spring-loaded pitching machine will pitch (with the assistance of a coach from the batting team).
 - ◇ There are no walks or called strikes by the plate umpire.
 - ◇ Pitching machine will be set up on mound.
 - ◇ There is a standing six (6) pitch rule. If a player does not get a hit after six (6) pitches, the batter is called out. If a player fouls the 6th pitch, they will be provided additional pitches until they either hit it into play, swing and miss, or take the pitch (in which case they will be out).
 - ◇ Any batted ball that hits the pitching machine or coach in the field of play is a dead ball, and the batter (and base runners) get to advance to the base they were headed to.
- k. If the teams determine that ninety (90) minutes will elapse prior to the 6th inning starting, then the last full inning played by both teams will adhere to the 6th inning rule for scoring (see 6d.). Teams should recognize and agree to this change prior to the start of the last inning.
- l. Infield fly rule does not apply.
- m. Foul pop-ups can be caught for an out; ball is dead after the catch (no base runner tagging/advancement).
- n. Bunting is allowed, however, fake bunting is prohibited. Should a player offer to bunt, then pull the bat back and swing at the pitch, the batter will be called out by the umpire.
 - ◇ Clarification: A player can offer to bunt and then pull back and decide to take the pitch instead. This rule only addresses the situation where the batter fakes a bunt and then swings away, which is not allowed.
 - ◇ Note: If a batter is turning to bunt, they should bunt. Jiggling the bat around, offering to bunt, and pulling back on every pitch will result in the batter being called out by the umpire.

7. BASE RUNNING:

- a. Base runners **MUST** wear batting helmets.
- b. Base runners cannot take leads.
- c. Stealing of 2nd and 3rd is allowed, but stealing of home is not permitted.
- d. Passed Balls & Wild Pitches: Runners may advance from 1st to 2nd and from 2nd to 3rd base on clear passed balls or wild pitches. Balls that are botched or deflected by the catcher are **DEAD** and no advance is allowed. Runners may not score on a passed ball or wild pitch.

A pitch where the catcher must dive to either side of the plate beyond the length of his arm to knock down the pitch shall be ruled a wild pitch allowing the runners to advance.

- ◇ Note: The intention of this rule is to reward good catching effort while limiting the ability to advance while catchers are learning the position. Any reasonable effort to catch the ball that results in contact of the pitch by the catcher's mitt should be ruled a dead ball by the umpire. It is the umpire's judgment whether to call the pitch which comes in contact with the catcher's mitt and is called dead, a ball or strike based on where it crossed the plate.
- e. An overthrow at ALL bases is a dead ball; no advancement.
- f. One (1) base advancement on an infield hit.
- g. When a batted ball is being thrown in from the outfield to the infield, base runners can only advance to the next base if they are more than half way to that base when the ball breaks the plane of the infield (grass to dirt). The ball does not have to be secured by an infielder,
- h. Base runners proceed at their own risk if they were not more than halfway to the next base when the ball breaks the plane from outfield to infield (in other words, they can be thrown out or will be asked to return to the previous base in those situations).
- i. Fielders cannot block base path unless fielding a batted ball.
- j. If a base runner is hit by a batted ball, they will be out and the ball is dead. The remaining base runners get to advance to the base they were headed to.

8. FIELDING:

- a. 10 defensive players will take the field. One (1) player per infield position (i.e., pitcher, catcher, 1st base, 2nd base, shortstop, 3rd base); 4 players are positioned as regular outfielders. Short fielders are not permitted.
- b. One (1) Fielding team coach may be positioned in the outfield to assist in learning the game.
- c. Coaches will have all players play an infield and outfield position during game (i.e., no slugger will be allowed to play just infield or just outfield for the entire game).
- d. it is suggested that coaches do not have a player play the same position more than twice in one game.
- e. However, coaches will use their best judgment to ensure players in 'high traffic areas (e.g., pitchers, 3rd baseman) are capable and alert enough to handle batted balls.
- f. No fielder is to stand in the baseline while runners are running the bases.

9. FIELD CLEANUP:

- a. Both Home and Away Team Coaches are responsible for coordinating the cleanup of the field at the conclusion of the game including the pickup of trash, etc...
- b. Bases, rakes, pitching machine, et al are to be returned to the Slugger storage shed - please see IMAA Slugger Director for shed's lock combination.
- c. Team equipment including bats, helmets, balls, and medical kits are to be collected and retained by each head coach.

10. SCORING

- a. Home Team is responsible for entering final game score on IMAA website

11. PLAYOFFS

- a. There are playoffs for the Slugger 2 league. Regular season records will determine seeding. Single game elimination. All regular season rules will apply.