

# Payette County Recreation District

## 2024 Youth Pitching Machine Rules – Rookies/U9

The purpose of the youth baseball league is to provide our youth the opportunity to participate in America's past-time. Baseball is played around the world, and is a PCRD program that helps us to provide opportunities for healthy use of leisure time. PCRD is committed to offering youth programs designed to be *fun, positive, learning experiences* with an emphasis on *participation, social interaction, and physical development*.

### **Policies, Procedures, & Rules:**

The PCRD youth baseball league will follow the rules set forth by NFHS. The 2024 NFHS Rule Book for the current year, will be used by PCRD leagues. Payette County Recreation District may, in some instances, modify rules that are deemed beneficial or necessary to enhance or improve our program.

### **1) REGISTRATION:**

- No player will be allowed to participate on a Payette County team until a completed registration form and liability waiver has been signed. PCRD registration fees must be paid as well. Payette County Recreation District does not provide medical insurance.

### **2) ELIGIBILITY:**

- Only players registered with PCRD or an out-of-county team may participate in games or practices.
- Parents may request to have their child move up an age division if a waiver is signed and the move is approved by PCRD.
- Players will not be allowed to participate in a division lower than their appropriate age division. Parents who desire to have a child with physical or mental disabilities participate in a lower age division may request special consideration. PCRD will consider all requests on an individual basis and make a decision to allow special requests based on the mental and physical skill level of the participant. The safety of all participants will be taken into consideration as well.
- Participants attending school outside their school district may choose to play on a team in the town where they reside or the school district in which they attend.

### **3) TEAM FORMATION:**

- The goal of PCRD is to make every attempt to ensure that teams are formed on the basis of *participation* and *parity*. Due to teams being formed in the communities in which they reside, it is not unusual for *team* skill levels to vary significantly.
- The head coach and *one* assistant will be allowed to have their children placed on their team if the team is located in the Payette County Recreation District. Requests are considered but not guaranteed.

## 4) UNIFORMS:

- PCRD solicits sponsors that provide team shirts for all teams. Players are allowed to keep these shirts after the season.
- Each player is required to have their own baseball glove.
- Shoes **must** be worn. Baseball cleats are recommended but not required. Steel cleats are prohibited.
- **All** jewelry should be removed prior to participation in practice or games that is exposed and could cause injury to the player or other participants. Jewelry determined to be unsafe by the umpire or PCRD will be removed or the player will not be allowed to participate. Medical alert bracelets/necklaces are not considered to be jewelry and may be worn if taped to the body so that medical information is visible.

## 5) CONDUCT:

- Coaches, parents, and spectators are asked to emphasize the social and physical benefits of participation and not the score of the contest. Spectators and parents are invited guests and their support is encouraged as long as it remains positive. Spectators and/or parents shall not criticize officials, players or coaches of any team.
- Coaches are expected to be **ideal** role models for their players. Sportsmanship, fair play, honesty, and integrity should be displayed at all times. Please be an example to all who participate and attend.
- The use of profanity or abusive language by *anyone* in attendance at PCRD programs is considered to be inappropriate and the offender(s) shall be subject to immediate ejection. The use of tobacco products, being under the influence of or use of alcohol/drugs during a contest or on park or school property will serve as grounds for immediate ejection, suspension and/or dismissal from PCRD programs.

## 6) FIELDS:

- Not pets or glass containers.
- Players and coaches are asked to be courteous and clear the field and dugouts as soon as possible so that the next game may start on time.
- **NO** soft toss against the infield or backstop fences at anytime. Whiffle ball soft toss may be conducted in the outfield.

## 7) GAME PROCEDURES:

- Game balls will be provided by PCRD for games held in the Payette County Recreation District.
- PCRD will make every effort to provide officials for all contests held within PCRD boundaries. If, for some reason, the official(s) do not show, we ask that coaches proceed with the game as scheduled.
- All team personnel should plan on arriving a minimum of 45 minutes prior to game time. Pre-game fielding practice is restricted to ground balls in foul territory and fly balls in the outfield so as to preserve the playing surface for all games played that day.
- Teams that cannot field a minimum of eight players may use players from the opposing team, or (if coaches and officials are notified) from any team in the same age division or lower on an SRV roster. Pickup players should not play more than twice in a season for the same team and must play in the outfield and bat last in the batting order. If players from the shorthanded team arrive late, they will be

added to the lineup immediately *or* substituted for pickup players or those being used from opposing teams as necessary. Please remember that participation is a primary goal of our programs.

- Coaches who become aware of the possibility of forfeiting due to a shortage of players should make every effort to plan ahead and secure additional players as needed. If the need to reschedule a game occurs, PCRDR should be notified so that opposing teams may be informed and arrangements made.
- PCRDR personnel or game officials will make the determination as to whether to call a game due to weather or field conditions immediately prior to its beginning or while in progress.
- If officials observe lightning in close proximity, the game will be suspended for a minimum of 20 minutes. At that time, officials will determine whether or not to continue based on safety first. If lightning is still observable, the game will be suspended at that point and will be continued at a later date if possible.
- It is very difficult for PCRDR to effectively cancel contests based on weather or field conditions prior to 2 pm. If it is obvious that field or weather conditions will create the need to cancel contests, coaches will be notified by 3 pm. MOST cancellations will be game time decisions.

## 8) PARENTS:

- Parents should make every attempt to set a *positive* example for the participants.
- Please remember that this is a recreation program. Sportsmanship, fair play, and fun are the emphasis of our programs. Focusing on the physical, mental, and social development of each of our participants far outweighs the outcome of the contest.
- PCRDR appreciates the time and effort our umpires put forth to contribute to our programs. Parents and coaches must remember that our umpires are doing the best they can, as are the participants. PCRDR is making every effort to educate and train our umpires to ensure quality officiating. Please thank them for the time and effort they put forth to provide our programs with competent umpires as opposed to criticizing them.

## 9) COACHES:

- Coaches should make every attempt to set a *positive, caring, and enthusiastic* example for the participants.
- No more than one head coach and two assistants are allowed in the dugout at any one time.
- Please show respect for the officials and teach your players to do so also. All decisions made by the officials are final. Protests involving rule interpretations will be handled at the time of the protest only. The field supervisor or umpires will make the final decision. No exceptions.
- Please remind your parents that children must be picked up promptly after games and practices. Give PCRDR a call if you have parents who are frequently late picking up their children.
- All coaches are responsible to keep an accurate scorebook and abide by the PCRDR policy manual.
- Please conduct a parents meeting to introduce yourself, assistants, team moms, etc. The parent meeting is a great time to give parents practice and game schedules and explain what you expect of the parents and their children. Please provide the names and contact information for yourself and assistants as well.
- If phone calls are necessary during the season for any reason, communicate with a parent if possible. This will help to eliminate any miscommunication that may occur.
- **PRACTICE:** Practices that are well organized and fun will allow your team to enjoy their preparation for competition. Program success can usually be measured by the level of satisfaction participants experience due to coaches who provide excellent practice plans.
  - Practice sites, dates, and times will be determined by the head coach. PCRDR *suggests* a minimum of two practices per week prior to each team's first game of the season.

# Payette County Recreation District

- Once league play begins, practices are scheduled solely at the discretion of each head coach. There are locations available throughout the county. It is best to check with the recreation district or school administration if you are unsure where you may conduct practice. Never practice on a field that has been prepared for a game.
- Practice scrimmages @ Mesa Park should be approved by PCRDR.

Suggested practice agenda (minimums and maximums):

**Rookies:** Not more than three per week and not longer than 1 ½ hours per practice.

**U9:** Not more than three per week and not longer than 1 1/2 hours per practice.

- **Game Responsibilities:**

- Keep your players in the dugouts and encourage your players to clean up their dugout after the game and promptly remove their personal belongings and gear.
- Do not allow spectators or parents in the dugout or on the field. Parents who are creating problems for the umpires or in other ways, are *your* responsibility.
- Please encourage your team and take part in a display of sportsmanship and respect for your opponent by shaking hands with the opposing team and thanking them for their participation.

- **Basic Skill Goals:** Skills to be stressed for all ages: follow directions; listen and work with teammates and coaches; be on time for practice and games; be dressed and ready to play.

- Rookies:** Learn basic rules; learn names, locations, and responsibilities of the different positions; learn basic batting techniques, base running, and fielding; experience catching.
- U-9:** Learn basic rules; learn names, locations, and responsibilities of the different positions; learn basic batting techniques, base running, and fielding.

## 10) PLAYING TIME:

- Each player in attendance must play a minimum of six defensive outs and bat once.
- All players in attendance must be placed in the batting order and can only be removed for illness, injury, or by player/parent choice. Players arriving late will be added to the lineup upon their arrival.
- Players who do not meet these minimum requirements must start the next game in the field and be placed at the top of the batting order.
- If there is disciplinary action to be taken, the following procedures must be adhered to:
  - Notify the parents, PCRDR, the opposing team and the umpires.
  - Note the disciplinary action in the score book.
  - Games have a time limit and may be called early. To ensure your players are meeting the minimum playing requirements, place them in the field as soon as possible. Players who arrive late will be placed at the bottom of the order. Coaches should make every attempt to allow players who arrive late to meet the minimum playing time requirement, but will not be held to it.
  - Coaches who abuse the minimum playing time requirement will be reminded of their responsibility and PCRDR policy. After this warning, coaches will be on notice and be in danger of being suspended or terminated for the remainder of the season and be subject to a review in following seasons.

## 11) EQUIPMENT (Payette County Teams):

- 3 bats, 10 regulation balls
- 5 batting helmets
- Catchers equipment
- PCRD Baseball Manual
- Please plan to turn in all equipment promptly at the end of the season.

## 12) PLAYING RULES

### GAME PROCEDURE:

A minimum of five minutes prior to game time, both coaches should exchange lineups and determine who will be the home team. Games will then proceed as follows:

\*The first two full innings of each machine pitch game will REQUIRE EACH team to bat their ENTIRE lineup, regardless of the number of outs recorded or players on each team. IF a player strikes out swinging during the first two innings of play, the ball will be placed on a tee and the player will have the opportunity to put the ball in play.

\*Each half-inning during the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> innings end when a team reaches 6 runs or 3 outs, whichever comes first. Strikeouts are an out and no opportunity to use the tee will be afforded.

### Time Limits/Run Rule/Rule Modifications:

No new inning will begin after one-hour and 20 minutes or 4 innings, whichever comes first. Drop-dead time will be 1 hour and 30 minutes and the game will end immediately to allow the next game to start on time. Each batter is allowed one fair batted ball or three swinging strikes, whichever comes first. No walks. Tie games result in a tie. No extra innings will be played.

### Number of Players, Pitching Distance:

| Division     | # of players | Pitching Machine Distance | Special Rules             |
|--------------|--------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Rookies & U9 | 10           | 35'                       | 4 players in the outfield |

**\*Baseball Bats:** No bat may be longer than 32" or exceed 2 5/8" in diameter. Each bat must carry the "USA", "BBCOR", "Little League", "Cal Ripken" or "USSSA" approved marking unless it is a solid one-piece wood bat that meets the maximum length and barrel diameter. Bats carrying the 1.15 exit ratio with 2 1/4" barrel are allowed.

**\*Softball Bats:** Must have the 2000, 2004 or USA stamp of approval to be legal for play.

- Pitching machine only will be in use. Speed should be set @ approximately 25-32 mph. Coach pitch is not allowed. PCRD strongly discourages this method due to the increased chance of injury to the adult "pitcher." NOT WORTH IT!
- Machine will be placed over the 35 foot pitching rubber.
- Umpire will feed the machine and monitor the position of the pitcher. The pitcher must play behind and to either side of the pitching machine and may not move towards the batter or to play the ball until it is contacted. The umpire will declare a dead ball if any player enters the 3-foot radius circle around the pitching machine. **Safety is a must!!**

# Payette County Recreation District

- Batted balls that strike the machine or power cord, or come to rest within the 3-foot circle around the pitching machine are dead and the batter awarded first. All other runners are awarded the base they are *forced* to only.

**Speed Up Rule:** Teams should be ready to play (either defensively or offensively) at a minimum of one minute from the end of any half-inning. This means the batter should be ready and, *most importantly*, that the defensive team is on the field and ready for play as soon as possible. Most delays occur due to the defensive team's catcher not being equipped in a timely manner. Coaches should require the player who will catch during the next half-inning to wear shin guards at all times unless it is obvious he/she will definitely come to bat. Each team is required to courtesy run for the player who will be catching the next half-inning if there are two outs. The runner should be a player who will **not** be playing defense the next half-inning or the last player who made an out in that half-inning.

\*All divisions: Runners may leave their base when the ball is released from the machine and may only advance on fair batted balls. **NO stealing or advancing on passed balls/wild pitches.**

\*Coaches should stop advancing runners in ROOKIES/U9 once the ball is in possession of an infielder who is located in the dirt section of the infield diamond.

**Sportsmanship:** All teams should refrain from making comments or “chatter” towards the opposing team’s players or personnel. This includes any comment such as “Hey, batter, batter, swing!,” etc. All coaches should allow their team members to cheer for and encourage *their team members only*. Please encourage your team to shake hands or high five the opposing team after the contest.