



*2021*

**BASEBALL  
MANAGERS  
HANDBOOK**

**AND LOCAL RULES OF PLAY**



## **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to the Athens Little League Coaching staff. We, the Athens Little League Board, are pleased to invite you as a manager or coach in the program and hope that you have a terrific season. Our website [www.athenslittleleague.org](http://www.athenslittleleague.org) is filled with information including schedules, calendars and a section just for coaches. We encourage you to spend some time at the Coaches Corner for tips on planning and conducting practice. Please take a few moments and register for the Coaches Resource Center at [www.littleleaguecoach.org](http://www.littleleaguecoach.org). The authorization code for Athens Little League is 133362.

Little League requires each hometown league to have every manager and coach attend a training session each season and to communicate clearly the objectives of the local league. Please make sure to attend all mandatory training sessions. Good Luck!

This Handbook has been prepared to give you the objectives for your season and the tools you need to manage a team. You are the go to person for the Athens Little League Board and the face of the league to your team's families. The Board is here to help you. Your Team Parent is available to help you but you will be the one your team looks to for leadership and clarity throughout the season.

Please refer to this guide along with the rulebook provided with your equipment as your "bylaws and local ground rules" for play. As managers, it is your responsibility to be familiar with the rules that govern our league and your game. This requires a bit of study! Like the kids we coach, we as coaches must be diligent in our effort. Welcome to the best of the Little League Journey.

Thanks again for your commitment to the program and the kids.

Play ball!!!

## **MANAGER'S ROLE**

The Little League manager and coach must be leaders. All must recognize that they hold a position of trust and responsibility in a program that deals with a sensitive and formative period of a child's development.

It is required that the manager and coach have understanding, patience and the capacity to work with children. The manager and coach should be able to inspire respect. Above all else, managers and coaches must realize that they are helping to shape the physical, mental and emotional development of young people.

The Little League manager must be something more than just a teacher. Knowledge of the game is essential but it is not the only badge of a Little League coach or manager.

While an adult with training and background in the game is a desirable candidate for manager or coach, league screening committees should look for other important qualities. Screening of managers, coaches and others at the local league level who have contact with children is also important in attempting to discover those with a history of child abuse.

The heart of Little League is what happens between the adult manager/coach and player. It is the manager more than any other individual who controls the situation in which the players may be benefited. Improving the level of leadership in this vital area must be a continuing effort.

Children of Little League age are strongly influenced by adults whose ideals and aspirations are similar to their own. The manager/coach and player share a common interest in the game, a desire to excel, and determination to win. Children often idolize their managers and coaches, not because the adult is the most successful coach or mentor, but because the manager and coach are sources of inspiration.

Managers and coaches must be adults who are sensitive to the mental and physical limitations of children of Little League age and who recognize that the game is a vehicle of training and enjoyment, not an end in itself. It has been stated many times that the program of Little League can only be as good as the quality of leadership in the managing and coaching personnel.

### **How Do I Line Up? Leadership Skills of Managers & Coaches**

Great Managers & coaches:

- Reflect an understanding of the age group they supervise.
- Are aware that they are an example to those with whom they work.
- Demonstrate that they have an appreciation of the philosophy of Little League, and cooperate with others in making the program of mutual benefit to all children.
- Show by example, that they respect the judgment and the position of authority of the umpire. Instill in their players a respect for the authority of adult leaders in the league.
- Exercise their leadership role adequately but leave the ball game in the hands of the players.
- Within the regulations of their own league and of Little League, provide an opportunity for each child to participate.
- Encourage their players at every opportunity. Familiarize themselves with the home background of the children and their families.
- Instill a desire to win and improve, striving to impart as much baseball or softball knowledge as possible to each player.

- Encourage good health habits, good grooming and care of the uniform.
- Are instrumental in shaping acceptable behavior patterns whether the team wins or loses.
- Know the playing rules and regulations of Little League and be able to interpret them correctly. Play by the rules and adhere to their intent, instilling in the players a respect for the rules of the game.
- Are well acquainted with the player selection system used in their league and select players for the team according to their abilities.
- Are cautious and use sound, reasonable judgment in protest situation.
- Have had an opportunity to participate in a preparatory training program concerning their responsibilities before being assigned to their position. (An apprenticeship program is highly desirable in screening potential managers).
- Have knowledge of first aid and safety.
- Have attended and completed Little League's Prevention and Emergency Management seminar.

### **ATHENS LITTLE LEAGUE COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES**

Managers are the leaders for each team. Managers will not only coach the kids but also encourage the participation of parents, enforce rules of play, insure that the guidelines and requirements of play are met and that the team is following the Athens Little League rules, regulations and principles. Managers will need to delegate but it is a manager's responsibility to ensure that everything is handled according to the rules and requests of Athens Little League.

**Communications:** Get to know your kids and their families early and often. Emails and phone calls are great, but face to face clear understandings between you and your team is the best way to develop the expectations and goals for your season. Never underestimate the value of excitement in your voice and have fun as Little League is a great journey for everyone involved.

**Practices and Indoor Cage time:** Schedules are assigned by A.L.L. Changes in practice schedules should be handled through Information Officer to insure that all available times are updated. Managers will insure that all practice is designed to meet the skill development for the specific age group. "Practice Plans" should be developed and communicated clearly to the kids and the parents. Setting clear expectations for one's self, each coach, each player, and the team (including the parents) will set the stage for a confident and productive season for all. As directed by Little League International: "Each manager or coach, without a plan, who gives less than best effort in good conscience does a disservice to L.L. and the children they serve." Success begins with planning.

**Games:** Managers will communicate the game schedule with players including early arrival for warm ups. The team mom should work with families to have snacks for post-game meeting. Managers will name the coaches who are on the field during the game. Each age group limits the adults on the field and in the dugout during play and the manager must designate these individuals. Managers will provide scorekeepers and/or pitch count recorders and home team managers must report final scores to the Blue Sombrero system on A.L.L. website immediately following each game. Each team's manager should describe basic bullet points as summary for sports news reports.

**Rainout or League Bulletins:** Will be posted on the Athens Little League Facebook page as well as emailed to all registered participants via the Blue Sombrero registration system.

**Team Parent:** The Parent (sometimes called Team mom) is selected by the manager and should be an organizing and inclusive force for the team. Team moms will assist managers in completing paperwork, notifying parents of activities and working with Opening Day, Picture Day, Concessions and Team Celebrations. At games, he/she should be a positive role model and culture keeper for LL.

**Paperwork:** Any adult working with the kids MUST complete the Volunteer Screening paperwork, including team volunteers and any other persons and/or hired workers working with kids. It is the manager's responsibility to insure that this is completed and turned in to the League Safety Officer. No adult should be working at a practice until his/her paperwork is submitted and cleared. Additionally, managers are required to have eligibility paperwork for each player on hand at all games and for future All-star eligibility reports. Affidavits of "proof of residency" must be dated prior to Feb 1st /yr. A completed Team Parent notebook should be prepared with areas to keep medical records and registration records and must be maintained. The manager must insure that it is complete and always available in the event of an injury or accident. Incident reports and Accidental Insurance forms for both Little League and ACC-Holland Park will be located in the concession stand.

**Uniforms/ Equipment:** Little League provides team hats and jerseys for each player, plus catcher's gear, balls, and batting helmets for each team. Parents should be made aware of LL approved equipment. It is the manager's responsibility to ensure that equipment provided by the league for the team is maintained and returned at the end of the season. Managers need to double check uniform orders and communicate with their families the colors for pants, belts and socks required.



# Athens Little League Ground Rules of Play Spring 2021

## 1. GENERAL GUIDELINES

- 1.1. Teams must adhere to all COVID policies and protocols the Athens Little League Board of Directors is implementing for spring 2021, including use of extended dugouts and team/spectator arrival-exit plans.
- 1.2. Home team provides 2 game balls, but bring extra. Home team also provides the official score book-keeper, and is responsible for setting up and storing the machines as needed. Holland Park Staff is not responsible for setting up the field. However, they do help us if asked as a favor- TELL THEM THANK YOU OFTEN!
- 1.3. Visiting team provides the score board operator and the official pitch counter.
- 1.4. Ten-run shut out rules apply in all divisions in which score is kept.
- 1.5. All pitching affidavits and player participation records should be entered at [athenslittleleague.org](http://athenslittleleague.org) within 24 hours of the conclusion of any game.
- 1.6. It is the manager's responsibility to have the team clean out and clear the dugout immediately following the game and before team meetings.

This is especially important for early games. Please respect our park facilities and keep things clean.

1.7. Conduct or behavior of any player, coach or manager during game play that in the opinion of the presiding umpire creates a safety hazard shall be deemed to be unsportsmanlike conduct and may subject the player, coach or manager to disqualification or ejection pursuant to Official Little League Rule 9.01 (d), regardless of whether the unsafe conduct or behavior was intentional or merely negligent. This shall include, but is not limited to, unsafe discarding of the bat after a batter has hit, “warm-up swings” in violation of Little League rules, throwing of helmets, etc. It is the sole discretion of the umpire to determine if such unsafe conduct has occurred and to take steps necessary to correct the behavior. The umpire should issue a warning for such unsafe conduct, and if the unsafe conduct continues, may request that the player, coach, or manager withdraw from the field of play for the remainder of the game, or officially eject the player, coach or manager in accordance with Little League Rules. In any division of play in which a continuous batting order is used, the voluntary withdrawal of a player at the request of an umpire shall be treated in the same manner as a withdrawal for an injury and the player shall be removed from the batting order with no penalty to the team and the player shall be eligible for the next scheduled game.

## **2. LEVELS OF PLAY, TEAM FORMATION AND DRAFT RULES.**

2.1. *NOTE: Per Little League Rules, drafts and team formations are conducted in secret. Therefore, the only people allowed in the draft room are the approved managers of the teams, the Player Agent(s), Division Vice-President, the League President, League Vice President and A.L.L. Board members.*

2.2. **Tee Ball.** For 4 & 5 year-old players. Score is not kept and every player bats each inning. Teams are generated randomly by division vice-president and approved by Player Agent and League President. In some seasons a team(s) comprised entirely of girls may be formed with consent of the parents.

2.3. **Coach Pitch.** For 5, 6 & 7 year old players (5 year old players are encouraged to have previously played a season of tee ball). Score is kept and outs recorded. Standings are not kept and there is no end of season tournament. All players shall participate in “tryouts” – a brief skills assessment judging ability in the following areas: Batting, running, fielding, catching, and throwing. Players are placed on teams of 10-11 players each based upon skill ratings from tryouts. In an effort to promote consistency of rules between divisions, as well as equitable division of player talent and coaching resources, team assignment requests (carpool requests, friends on the same team, coach requests) are discouraged.

2.4. **Singe “A” – Machine Pitch.** For 7 & 8 year old players. Modified rules of play. Pitching machine is utilized during all innings. Season standings are kept based upon winning percentage and posted on the Athens Little League website. All players

shall participate in “tryouts” – a brief skills assessment judging ability in the following areas: Batting, running, fielding, catching, and throwing. Players are placed on teams of 10-12 players each based upon skill ratings from tryouts. In an effort to promote consistency of rules between divisions, as well as equitable division of player talent and coaching resources, team assignment requests (carpool requests, friends on the same team, coach requests) are discouraged.

**2.4.1. 9-12 Year Old Baseball.** All 9-12 year old players not currently assigned to a major league team must participate in tryouts. Skills assessed shall be batting, running, fielding, catching, and throwing. Division Vice-Presidents and Player Agent(s) shall conduct tryouts. Major league managers shall observe and, in addition to any personal notes on players, they shall rank each player on a scale of 1-5 for each assessed skill. Major League managers may utilize the assistance of any volunteer who does not have a player participating in 9-12 tryouts during evaluations.

**2.4.2. Major League.** Players 9-12 years of age may be drafted to existing major league teams using option “A” from the Little League Operating Manual. All 12 year olds who participate in tryouts must be drafted to major league teams.

**2.4.3. AA Minor League – Machine/Kid Pitch.** 9, 10 & 11 year-old players not selected for Major League or AAA teams will be placed on AA teams. Modified rules of play. Pitching

machine will be utilized the entire game to start the season. Pitching machine may be phased out and eventually removed from play at the mid-point of the regular season after consultation with managers and Division VP. Season standings are kept based upon winning percentage and posted on the Athens Little League website. Modified base stealing rules apply.

### **3. RELEASE AND REPLACEMENT OF PLAYERS DURING REGULAR SEASON**

**3.1. Multiple League Participation.** Athens Little League does not prohibit players for participating in more than one youth sports program at a time (i.e. Little League Baseball AND school baseball). If doing so causes a player to repeatedly miss games and practice or otherwise causes a disruption to his/her Little League team, he/she may be released by the manager from the team.

**3.2. Absenteeism.** Players missing more than ten consecutive days of scheduled team events (games or practices) without explanation should be reported by the manager to the Player Agent and V.P. of the division. Repeated unexcused or unexplained absences may result in the player being released from the team. Players must play minimum of 60% of games to be All-Star eligible.

#### **3.3. Injuries.**

**3.3.1.** Any player who is injured during the season must be immediately reported to the Player Agent by that player's manager.

**3.3.2.** The Player Agent will consult with the player, the player's parents/guardians, and any treating physician (as necessary) to determine whether the player will be able to

return to play within a reasonable time. The board has determined that “reasonable time” shall mean within 4 weeks of the injury, but each player’s situation will be determined on a case by case basis by the Board. If a player is unable to return in a reasonable time as determined by the board then the player must be released and replaced on his/her team.

3.3.3. In lower divisions of play (Coach Pitch, Machine Pitch, AA) release of an injured player may not result in replacement, subject to player availability.

3.3.4. A player lost to injury with 2 weeks or less in the regular season remaining is out for the year and will not be replaced.

3.3.5. If duration of title applies to any player released due to injury (Major League ONLY), player would be eligible to return to his/her team the following year.

### **3.4. Replacement of Players Due To Injury or Removal from Team**

3.4.1. Any release of a player from a major league team, regardless of reason for release, must be approved by the Board pursuant to the Little League Rule Book.

3.4.2. Once a vacancy on a major league team has been created, the Player Agent will provide the manager with a list of eligible 11 year old minor league players who may be “called up” to fill the vacancy.

3.4.3. Once provided with a list of eligible players, the manager shall determine his choice for a replacement player within a reasonable time, no later than five days, although the Player Agent may extend this time in order for the

manager to observe all potential candidates play.

- 3.4.4. Once a choice is made, the manager shall inform the Player Agent, who shall confer with the parent(s) of the prospective replacement player. Players may refuse to be called up to the majors during the season, but by doing so they forfeit their right to be called up by a different major league team later that same season.
- 3.4.5. If the player accepts the call up, then he or she immediately becomes a rostered member of his or her new major league team and will play in the next regularly scheduled game for that team.
- 3.4.6. If the manager's first choice for a replacement player declines to be called up to the majors, the manager shall choose another eligible 11 year old as a replacement player. If no eligible 11 year old agrees to be called up, then the manager may seek to fill the vacancy with any eligible minor league player in the following order of priority: AAA 10 year olds. If no AAA 10 year olds are eligible or all decline, then AA 10 year olds. If no AA 10 year olds are eligible or all decline, then AAA 9 year olds. If no AAA 9 year olds are eligible or all decline, then AA 9 year olds.
- 3.4.7. Any player selected and moved up to the major league to fill a vacancy gains duration of title and shall remain on his or her new team for the remainder of his or her 9-12 eligibility.
- 3.4.8. Vacancies created on AAA teams, either by injury, absenteeism, or by virtue of a AAA player being called up to the major league, will be filled from a list of eligible AA players in a similar manner as players are replaced on

major league teams. The Board reserves the right to allow a vacancy on a AAA team to remain unfilled based upon specific factors affecting the division and the league.

3.4.9. Vacancies created on AA, either by injury, absenteeism, or by virtue of a AA player being called up to fill a AAA vacancy will likely remain unfilled. The Board reserves the right to create a player pool pursuant to Official Little League Rules to address vacancies on AA or Single "A" Machine Pitch teams.

4. **PROTESTS.** Game protests must be made by a manager only. Manager may protest when he or she feels that a rule has been misapplied or ignored. The protest may not be over a judgment call (fair or foul, safe or out, ball or strike). Manager wishing to protest a game must inform umpire and contact division V.P. & President immediately. UMPIRE MUST BE INFORMED BEFORE HE OR SHE LEAVES THE FIELD AFTER THE CONCLUSION OF THE GAME. If the umpire is not informed before they leave the field, the game stands and the protest will not be reviewed. Protests may be made in Machine Pitch, AA, AAA and Major League divisions. No protests are allowed in Tee Ball or Coach Pitch.

## 5. **POST SEASON PLAY.**

5.1. **Post-Season Divisional Tournaments.** Single "A" (Machine Pitch), AA, AAA and Major League Division teams shall play in post-season tournaments at the conclusion of the regular season. These tournaments may be single or double elimination tournaments based upon the number of teams and at the discretion of the board. Teams are seeded based on rankings from

the regular season. Higher seeded teams are always the home team in tournament play.

5.2. **All Stars.** Athens Little League participates in a variety of “all-star” tournaments geared towards multiple age groups during the summer months. Teams are selected through a ballot procedure including players, coaches, managers and the Athens Little League Board. Teams are fielded by age group and may include teams in Rookie Division (7-8), Sandlot Division (9’s), 9-10, 10-11, and 11-12. Specific decisions regarding All-Stars, including number of and formation of teams, are made by the board after the regular season has begun.

## **6. LOCAL RULES OF PLAY**

### **6.1. Tee Ball League**

6.1.1. Score will not be kept.

6.1.2. All players will bat every inning. Outs may be recorded for training purposes only.

6.1.3. Players must wear batting helmets before leaving dugout & may not remove helmets before returning to the dugout. No “warm up swings” allowed outside fence/dug out.

6.1.4. Players for the offensive team may not leave the dugout except to bat. This includes being on the field or with their parents in the stands. Coaches must ensure control.

6.1.5. One coach will be stationed at home plate to “size” up the tee for the batter and place the ball on tee. This coach is also responsible for watching to be sure (in a minimal amount of time) the player is in a proper stance to hit the ball. (Make adjustments quickly - remember (1) hour time limit).

- 6.1.6. The player is to bat the ball, not the tee. If the tee is hit, it is a foul ball.
- 6.1.7. The ball must go a minimum of 10 feet or it is a foul ball. No bunting is allowed.
- 6.1.8. A runner may be put out by the defensive team and must return to the dugout. Do not leave players on base if they are put out. We are here to teach the game. Children at this level will sometimes get upset but this is the perfect point to explain to the child what is going on. Make sure to praise great effort and accomplishment.
- 6.1.9. Base-running: Once the batter hits the ball, all runners may only advance one base.
- 6.1.10. The offensive team's inning is over when all players have batted, regardless of how many outs the defense has recorded.
- 6.1.11. No inning shall begin after 45 minutes of game time have elapsed. Managers shall determine official start time of the game prior to commencement of the first inning.
- 6.1.12. A team will position one coach or volunteer in the coach's box at first base and one coach or volunteer in the coach's box at third base. These coaches are responsible for giving instruction to the runners.
- 6.1.13. All players will play defense regardless of how many are on a team.
- 6.1.14. Players will rotate defensive positions every inning in order to develop depth of skills at different positions.
- 6.1.15. There is no catcher for safety reasons.
- 6.1.16. Players may not move from the fielding positions until AFTER the ball is hit.
- 6.1.17. Defensive players should be placed according to regulation play, including the outfield. No more than six players may "play

on the dirt”: 1st, 2nd, shortstop, short center fielder, 3rd & pitcher.

6.1.18. Encourage players to throw to 1st base when a batter becomes a runner.

6.1.19. The defensive team is allowed two (2) coaches in either the outfield or outside the foul lines, but must not interfere with any play. They may give instruction but may not touch the ball or any player on the field while any hit ball is in play.

6.1.20. The infield fly rule does not apply.

## **6.2. Coach Pitch League**

6.2.1. Each team must have a minimum of seven players for a game to be played. A team may play a game with 8 players without penalty. Any team playing a game with only seven players will automatically take an out each time they reach the end of their lineup – the missing eighth batter in the lineup is an automatic out. A game may commence with either team having only six players present (a player running late), the “late player” must be placed at the bottom of the lineup. Home team may take the field with only six players at the top of first inning, but the “late player” must arrive by the time he or she has been reached in the lineup when the home team bats. If the “late player” has not arrived by the time he has been reached in the lineup, then the game shall be suspended and recommenced pursuant to Little League rule book.

6.2.2. Score will be kept, but there will be no record kept of games won, lost, or tied throughout the season.

- 6.2.3. All players will bat every inning unless 3 put outs or 5 runs are scored (5 run rule). The batting order is continuous.
- 6.2.4. Players must wear batting helmets before leaving dugout & may not remove helmets before returning to dug out. No “warm up swings” allowed outside fence/dug out.
- 6.2.5. Players for the offensive team may not leave the dugout except to bat. Includes being on the field or with their parents in the stands. Coaches must ensure control.
- 6.2.6. Each team will have no more than five (5) coaches (including Manager) inside the fence during games, including any adult volunteer acting as a dugout coach or monitor.
- 6.2.7. The offensive team will have four coaches in the field: one pitching, one behind the plate, and two base coaches in the coach’s boxes at first base third base. NO “SECOND BASE” OFFENSIVE COACHES.
- 6.2.8. The pitching coach will position him/herself on the field approximately 22 ft. in front of home plate (half way between the pitching rubber and home plate).
- 6.2.9. The offensive coach behind home plate will retrieve missed pitches and, in the event it is needed, “size” up the tee and place the ball on the tee.
- 6.2.10. 1st and 3rd base coaches are responsible for giving instruction to the runners. The base coaches may not for any reason touch, push or in any way physically help a runner advance. A coach touching or helping a runner advance will result in the runner being called out.
- 6.2.11. The offensive team will have one additional coach or adult volunteer in the dugout.

- 6.2.12. The defensive team is allowed two (2) coaches in either the outfield or outside the foul lines, but they must not interfere with any play. They may give instruction but may not touch the ball or any player on the field while any hit ball is in play. No more than two defensive coaches are allowed on the field during play – additional defensive coaches may be outside the dugout, but must remain within arm's length of the dugout fencing.
- 6.2.13. The pitching coach will toss a maximum of three over hand or under hand pitches from his/her knees to the batter and ensure they are in the strike zone. Batter will get 3 swings/misses from the coach. If none are put into play, the batter will have two swings to hit off the tee. Knocking the ball off the tee by hitting the tee shall be called "foul." The batter must hit the ball not the tee. A player may not advance to base without hitting the ball. No walks.
- 6.2.14. The ball must be hit (not the tee) and go a minimum of 10 feet or it is a foul ball. No bunting is allowed.
- 6.2.15. A runner may be put out by the defensive team and must return to the dugout. Players may not be left on base if he/she is put out.
- 6.2.16. All runners may advance a maximum of two bases on any offensive play, regardless of any defensive indifference or errors.
- 6.2.17. All players will play defense regardless of how many are on a team.
- 6.2.18. Defensive players will rotate every inning in order to develop depth of skills at different positions. Each player **MUST** play at least one inning in an outfield position each game. No

player may play consecutive innings at any position.

- 6.2.19. Players may not move from the fielding positions until AFTER the ball is hit.
- 6.2.20. There is no catcher for safety reasons.
- 6.2.21. Defensive players shall be placed according to regulation play, including the outfield. No more than six players may “play on the dirt”, 1st, 2nd, shortstop, short center fielder, 3rd & pitcher.
- 6.2.22. Encourage players to throw to 1st base when a batter becomes a runner.
- 6.2.23. No inning shall begin after 60 minutes of game time have elapsed. Managers and umpire shall determine official start time of the game prior to commencement of the first inning and an official game time shall be kept by one manager/coach.
- 6.2.24. The infield fly rule does not apply.

### **6.3. Minor League, Single A (Machine Pitch)**

- 6.3.1. Each team must have a minimum of eight players for a game to be played. A team may play a game with 8 players without penalty. A game may commence with either team having only seven players present (i.e. a player running late), the “late player” must be placed at the bottom of the lineup. Home team may take the field with only seven players at the top of first inning, but the “late player” must arrive by the time he or she has been reached in the lineup when the home team bats. If the “late player” has not arrived by the time he has been reached in the lineup, then the game shall be suspended and recommenced pursuant to Little League rule book.

- 6.3.2. All players will bat every inning until 3 put outs or 5 runs are scored (in the first through fourth innings only). In the fifth and sixth innings (or beyond), if played, all players will bat until 3 put outs. The batting order is continuous. A ten run rule is in effect after three and a half innings (The home team is declared the winner of the game if they have a lead of at least ten runs after the visiting team's fourth inning at-bat). The visiting team is declared the winner if they have a lead of at least ten runs after the home team's fourth inning at-bat. This rule applies in any inning subsequent to the fourth.
- 6.3.3. Players must wear batting helmets before leaving dugout & may not remove helmets before returning to dug out. No "warm up swings" allowed outside fence/dug out.
- 6.3.4. Each team will have no more than four (4) coaches (including Manager) inside the fence during games, including any adult volunteer acting as a dugout coach or monitor.
- 6.3.5. Offensive manager shall have (2) approved coaches outside foul lines at first and third base and place one to either the left or right side of the catcher against the backstop to police pitched stray balls. The coach may not in any way alter the direction of any thrown or batted ball. Coach must immediately vacate any area occupied if any play could be made.
- 6.3.6. First and third base coaches are responsible for giving instruction to the runners. The base coaches may not for any reason touch, push or in any way physically help a runner advance. A coach touching or helping a runner advance will result in the runner being called out.

- 6.3.7. The offensive team will have one additional coach or adult volunteer in the dugout.
- 6.3.8. No defensive coaches are allowed on the field either inside or outside the foul lines during play – defensive coaches may be outside the dugout, but must remain within arm’s length of the dugout fencing.
- 6.3.9. The machine and the extension cord is part of the playing field. If the ball is deflected, hits and stops, goes fair or foul, the ball is still a “live” ball.
- 6.3.10. Machine speed shall be set at 40 mph and placed 45 ft. from home plate.
- 6.3.11. No inning shall begin after 75 minutes of game time have elapsed. Managers and umpire shall determine official start time of the game prior to commencement of the first inning and an official game time shall be kept by one manager/coach. The 5 run rule is not in effect during the fifth or sixth innings, if time allows more than four innings to be played.
- 6.3.12. A batter may strike out. A strikeout is declared if the batters swings and misses 3 pitches OR in the umpire’s judgment 3 pitches are strikes AND the batter refuses or does not swing. There is no minimum or maximum number of pitches thrown by the machine. The umpire reserves the right to adjust the machine up and down when a batter is at bat in order to get the ball in the strike zone.
- 6.3.13. Machine may not issue a walk.
- 6.3.14. On an overthrow to the fence/outfield marker at first base, play shall be stopped and the ball declared dead. Any runners on base at the commencement of the play who have safely advanced to another base prior to the ball being declared dead shall remain on that

base. Third base runners reaching home plate prior to the ball being declared dead shall be scored a run. Any runners who have not safely advanced to the next base at the time the ball is declared dead shall return to their previous base unless forced to another base by the batter's advancement to second. After the ball is declared dead, the batter/runner advancing to first shall be placed on second base, and any runners then on second or third shall advance one base if forced to by the placement of the batter/runner on second base. A runner on third base forced home by this action will be scored a run.

6.3.15. Unless a ball is overthrown at first base as described above, play shall stop only when the defensive team has the ball AND control of the lead runner on base. Play does not stop simply because the player runs to the pitcher's mound or 10 ft. circle. An umpire shall have the final decision as to whether a play has stopped or not and at which time he or she will declare- "TIME." For consistency, Umpire must declare "TIME": at the conclusion of each play. Players should be taught/reminded NOT to relinquish the ball to the umpire until he or she has called "TIME"

6.3.16. Player in the pitcher position must stand to either the left or right side of the machine (not in front), AND MUST have 1 foot completely inside the 10 ft. dirt circle surrounding the machine. The player may not leave this position until the ball is put into play, at which time he becomes a fielder- THIS IS A SAFETY RULE AND WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED

- 6.3.17. No bunting against the machine. No stealing against the machine.
- 6.3.18. Ten defensive players per inning. Each player must play a minimum of 2 innings or 6 defensive outs per game but managers may substitute after 3 defensive outs. (Free substitutions between innings). Managers are strongly suggested to provide each player with at least 4 innings of defensive play.
- 6.3.19. No more than six players may “play on the dirt”: 1st, 2nd, shortstop, 3rd, catcher & pitcher.
- 6.3.20. A player must play catcher each inning, even if a defensive team only has eight or nine players.
- 6.3.21. A ball stuck under the fence or bouncing over the fence shall be declared dead and the umpire will place kids on the appropriate base/bases.
- 6.3.22. The infield fly rule does not apply.

#### **6.4. Minor League, AA - Machine/Kid Pitch.**

- 6.4.1. Each team must have a minimum of eight players for a game to be played. A team may play a game with 8 players without penalty. A game may commence with either team having only seven players present (i.e. a player running late), the “late player” must be placed at the bottom of the lineup. Home team may take the field with only seven players at the top of first inning, but the “late player” must arrive by the time he or she has been reached in the lineup when the home team bats. If the “late player” has not arrived by the time he has been reached in the lineup, then the game

shall be suspended and recommenced pursuant to Little League rule book.

- 6.4.2. All players will bat every inning until 3 put outs or 5 runs are scored (First through fourth innings), or until 3 put outs (fifth and sixth innings, if played). The batting order is continuous.
- 6.4.3. Players must wear batting helmets before leaving dugout & may not remove helmet before returning to the dugout. No “warm up swings” allowed outside fence/dug out.
- 6.4.4. Each team will have no more than four (4) coaches (including Manager) inside the fence during games, including any adult volunteer acting as a dugout coach or monitor.
- 6.4.5. Offensive manager shall have (2) approved coaches outside foul lines at first and third base and one additional coach or adult volunteer in the dugout.
- 6.4.6. No defensive coaches are allowed on the field either inside or outside the foul lines during play – defensive coaches may be outside the dugout, but must remain within arm’s length of the dugout fencing.
- 6.4.7. Machine speed shall be set at 40 mph and placed 45 ft. from home plate.
- 6.4.8. Play stops when defensive team has control of the runner(s), pitcher has control of ball and has held all runners & catcher is in position to receive the ball, not just when the ball is in the area of the pitcher’s mound. An umpire shall have the final decision as to whether a play has stopped or not. During machine pitch play, umpires will declare “TIME” when he/she has determined that play has stopped.

- 6.4.9. The pitching machine will be used the entire game until the Board (in consultation with the AA managers and AA VP) believes kids are ready to pitch themselves. A batter may strike out while facing the machine but shall not walk. A strike out occurs with three swings or three strikes called by the umpire. There is no minimum or maximum number of pitches thrown by the machine. The umpire reserves the right to adjust the machine up and down when a batter is at bat in order to get the ball in the strike zone. Balls and strikes will be called by the umpire when machine is not in use.
- 6.4.10. No inning shall begin after 90 minutes of game time have elapsed. Managers and umpire shall determine official start time of the game prior to commencement of the first inning and an official game time shall be kept by one manager/coach. The 5 run rule is not in effect during the fifth or sixth innings, if time allows more than four innings to be played.
- 6.4.11. A batter is automatically out on a dropped / missed third (3rd) strike by the catcher.
- 6.4.12. No stealing against the machine. Runners may advance on passed balls and overthrown/dropped returns to the pitcher per Little League rules when machine is not in use.
- 6.4.13. Players in the pitcher position must stand to either the left or right of the umpire during machine pitch and have 1 foot completely inside the dirt circle of the pitcher's mound. This player may not leave this position until the ball is put into play at which time he becomes a fielder.

- 6.4.14. No bunting off the machine. Batters may bunt against player pitchers.
- 6.4.15. For pitch count rules---follow Option 1 of the Little League Rule Book. All teams shall follow pitch count rules and provide for record keeping. Managers shall enter/submit game scores and pitch counts within 24 hours of the conclusion of any game as instructed by the AA VP.
- 6.4.16. The machine and the extension cord are part of the playing field. If the ball is deflected, hits and stops, goes fair or foul, the ball is still a "live" ball.
- 6.4.17. All overthrows are "live".
- 6.4.18. Nine defensive players per inning. Each player must play a minimum of 2 innings or 6 defensive outs per game but managers may substitute after 3 defensive outs. (Free substitutions between innings) Managers are strongly suggested to provide each player with at least 4 innings of defensive play per game.
- 6.4.19. The infield fly rule does apply.
- 6.4.20. There are no balks.

## **6.5. Major League**

- 6.5.1. (NEW FOR 2021) No inning shall begin after 90 minutes of game time have elapsed. Managers and umpire shall determine official start time of the game prior to commencement of the first inning and an official game time shall be kept by one manager/coach.
- 6.5.2. All other rules come directly from the official Little League Rule Book.
- 6.5.3. For pitch count rules---follow Option 1 of the Little League Rule Book. All teams shall

follow pitch count rules and provide for record keeping. Managers shall enter/submit game scores and pitchcounts within 24 hours of the conclusion of any game as instructed by the Major League VP.

## 7. TIME LIMITS

- COACH PITCH: NO NEW INNING AFTER 60 MINUTES
- MACHINE PITCH: NO NEW INNING AFTER 75 MINUTES
- AA (MINORS): NO NEW INNING AFTER 90 MINUTES
- MAJORS: NO NEW INNING AFTER 90 MINUTES

**Procedure Regarding Time Limits:** At the plate meeting the umpire *shall* declare an official start time for the game. If an umpire fails/forgets to do this, managers should ask that the umpire declare an official start time. It is suggested that a cell phone clock be used so that umpires and managers can be in sync. If the plate meeting is occurring *before* the scheduled start time of the game, then the scheduled start time should be used as the official start time. If the game has been delayed the umpire shall declare the official start time at the plate meeting. No inning may begin after the expiration of the time limits set out above. ***An inning officially begins when the final out of the previous inning is called.*** Once time has expired, then the current inning becomes the final inning of the game.

***Example 1:*** A Coach Pitch game (60 minute time limit) has an official start time of 5 PM. At 6:01 PM the game is in the top of the fourth inning. The fourth inning is now the final inning of the game. If the home team is in the lead at the conclusion of the top of the fourth inning, then game will be declared over after the third out of

*that half-inning (top of the fourth). Otherwise, the full fourth inning shall be played and the team with the most runs at the conclusion of the fourth inning shall be declared the winner.*

**Example 2:** *A Major League game begins at 7:15 PM. The fourth inning ends with a strike out at 8:43 PM. A fifth inning shall be played, and officially becomes the final inning of the game at 8:45 PM. If the home team is in the lead at the conclusion of the top of the fifth inning, then game will be declared over after the third out of that half-inning (top of the fifth). Otherwise, the full fifth inning shall be played and the team with the most runs at the conclusion of the fifth inning shall be declared the winner.*

**Example 3:** *A Major League game begins at 7:15 PM. The fourth inning ends with a strike out at 8:48 PM. The ball game is over and no fifth or sixth inning shall be played.*

**Time Limits and The Five Run Rule:** Please note that any suspension of the five run rule is NOT based upon an arbitrary determination by the umpire of a “final inning.” Suspension of the five run rule occurs in certain specific innings of a game as outlined in this rulebook.

**Example 4:** *A Minor League game begins at 5:30 PM. Per local rules, the five-run rule is suspended during the fifth and sixth inning of all Minor League games. Time expires during the fourth inning. There will be no fifth or sixth inning and the five run rule will remain in effect for the entire game.*

While it may seem illogical, all games played in divisions with the five-run rule should be allowed to complete pursuant to these time limit rules *regardless of the*

*impact that the five-run rule would have on the outcome of the game. The reason for this is that standings are kept for the divisions that use this rule. Run differential is one of the means of determining who shall prevail in a tiebreaker in the season standings. Teams should be allowed to score as many runs as these rules allow as it could make a difference as to their placement in the standings, even if it cannot possibly make a difference in that specific ball game.*

***Example 5:*** *A Machine Pitch game begins at 5:30 PM. At 7:16 PM the game is in the top of the fourth inning, and the visiting team leads the home team by seven runs. Time has run and the fourth inning is now the final inning. The five-run rule is still in effect. While there is no way for the home team to prevail in the game, they should still be allowed to bat in the bottom of the fourth inning and have an opportunity to reduce their run deficit. Umpires should never call a ballgame just because the home team cannot possibly win because of the “five run rule.”*

NOTE: The ten run “mercy rule” from the Official Little League Rulebook remains in effect as published and is not affected by any local rule.



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