

## **Aston-Middletown Little League**

### **American League House Rules**

The American League consists of 8- and 9-year-old players. It is possible some 7-year-old players will be drafted to play in this league. “Baseball age” may be different from the child’s actual age. Please use the [Little League Age Calculator](#) to determine a child’s baseball age.

All AMLL American League games are to be conducted in accordance with the latest edition of [Little League Baseball’s Official Regulations and Playing Rules](#) except as amended by the house rules listed below. (Some of the rules listed below merely clarify or emphasize certain official Little League rules.) All questions should be directed to the American League Commissioner.

### **COACHING STAFF**

1. Members. Each team will have a coaching staff approved by the Board of Directors. Each coach must complete a Little League Volunteer Application and a current Criminal Record Check prior to assuming his/her coaching responsibilities; both the application and the record check must be completed annually. Any member of the coaching staff whose verification package is incomplete and did not receive approval for a special grace period, will not be allowed in the dugouts or on the field.
2. Dugout. Each team may have no more than four coaches – one manager and three assistants – in the dugout during a game. Apart from coaches, no non-players may be in the dugout during a game. In the absence of a coach, another adult may temporarily assist in the dugout as a scorekeeper. **If not serving as base coach or warming up a pitcher, all managers/coaches must be in the dugout during play.** Coaches are allowed to warm up the pitchers.
3. Base Coaches. At least one base coach must be a member of the coaching staff. If a player acts as a base coach, he/she must wear a batting helmet.

### **GAME PLAY**

#### **1. First 3-4 Innings - Kid Pitch Innings**

- a. Pitching Distance: 9-year-old pitchers will pitch from 46'. Coaches have the option to pitch 8-year-olds or younger from 42'. Nail-down pitching rubbers are in the equipment shed.
- b. Mandatory 8U Pitcher: An eligible 8-year-old or younger pitcher must pitch. That 8-year-old must pitch to at least 4 consecutive batters or complete an inning.
- c. Time Limit: No new kid-pitch inning should be started after 1 hour and 10 minutes after the *actual* start of the game.
- d. Hit Batters: A pitcher must be removed if he/she hits **3 batters in a game**. Consistent with Little League rules, a batter that is hit by a ball that bounces first is considered a hit batter and is awarded 1st base.
- e. Four Walks: A pitcher must be removed if he/she issues 4 consecutive walks (or a combination of walks/hit batters)

- f. If a pitcher is removed from pitching, they may not return to pitch in that same game, regardless of pitch count.
- g. Warming Up: Pitchers get 5-7 warm-up pitches between innings. Coaches may warm-up pitchers, both on the field and in the bullpen. In the bullpen, a player must guard the warm-up pitcher and he/she must wear a helmet and glove (Warm-up pitches do not count toward a pitcher's pitch count).
- h. No intentional walks
- i. No balks
- j. Dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> Strike is NOT in effect.
- k. See PITCHING RULES below for more specific rules regarding pitchers.

## **2. Final 2 Innings - Pitching Machine**

- a. Pitching Machine Operation: The machine must be fed by a coach from the batting team. Under no circumstance shall a coach ask an umpire to feed the machine.
- b. Pitching Machine Placement: The machine wheel should be placed directly over the rubber 46' from home plate.
- c. Pitching Machine Speed: The machine shall be set to 42 mph for all games. Coaches may not alter the speed of the machine to a different speed, even if in agreement. Any violation may result in disciplinary action.
- d. Adjustments to the Machine: Coaches should not adjust the machine trajectory except after a half inning is completed. However, it is recognized that as balls become worn, adjustments to the machine are needed and sometimes those adjustments are necessary after an inning has started. Both teams' coaches should be in agreement that a mid-inning adjustment is necessary.
- e. Ball Hitting the Machine: If a batted *or thrown* ball hits the machine, the ball is dead. All runners get 1 base.
- f. No Walks Off Machine: No walks will be issued during the machine pitch innings. However, a batter may be called out on strikes if he/she does not swing. There is no limit on the number of pitches a hitter may see from the machine during an at-bat. The hitter stays at bat until he/she strikes out (swinging or looking) or hits a ball that is playable.
- g. Coach Must Avoid: The coach feeding the machine may not field the ball and should do his/her best to stay away from the play.
- h. Pitcher Positioning During Machine Innings: The fielder assigned the pitching position should be on either the 1st or 3rd base side of the machine. He/she should be even with the pitching rubber and should have at least 1 foot in the dirt of the mound cutout.

## **3. Pitching**

- a. Pitching Limits. The manager must remove the pitcher when said pitcher reaches the limit for his/her age group, but the pitcher may remain in the game at another position. The pitcher may finish the batter if the limit is reached in the middle of an at bat.
  - i. 11-and 12-year-olds may throw 85 pitches per day.
  - ii. 9- and 10-year-olds may throw 75 pitches per day.
  - iii. 7- and 8-year-olds may throw 50 pitches per day.

- iv. \*\*Failure to strictly follow these requirements will result in the manager's suspension for at least 1 game\*\*
- b. Rest Requirements. Pitchers must adhere to the following rest requirements. Official pitch count reverts back to the first pitch to the last batter. Last Batter First Pitch (LBFP) is found in GameChanger -> Box Score -> View Full Stats -> Pitching -> Advanced.
  - i. 66 or more pitches in a day, four (4) calendar days rest must be observed.
  - ii. 51 - 65 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed.
  - iii. 36 - 50 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed.
  - iv. 21 – 35 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed.
  - v. 1-20 pitches in a day, no (0) calendar days of rest must be observed.
  - vi. A player may not pitch in more than one game in a day.
  - vii. A pitcher may not pitch three days in a row.
  - viii. \*\*Failure to strictly follow these requirements will result in the manager's suspension for at least 1 game\*\*
- c. Pitching and Catching. A pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day. If a player catches even a single pitch of 4 innings, the player may not pitch later in that game. For instance, a player can catch the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> innings and still pitch the 6<sup>th</sup>. However, if the player catches the 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> innings and a single pitch in the 5<sup>th</sup>, the player cannot pitch later in that game.

#### 4. Fielding

- a. Number of Fielders: Ten (10) players will play the field. There will be 4 outfielders (LF, LCF, RCF, RF). If a team has only 9 players, they may play with 9 fielders.
- b. Outfielders 20' Back From Infield: Outfielders must be at least 20 feet from the outer edge of the infield dirt. Coaches that do not enforce this rule will be warned, and if it appears that they are not vigilantly enforcing this rule, they will be suspended.
- c. Outfielders Making Plays in the Infield: An outfielder cannot complete an unassisted force out or tag. There must be a transfer of the ball from an outfielder to an infielder in order to record a force out or tag out.
- d. Infield Possession: If a ball is batted into the outfield, once the ball is thrown into the infield (on dirt or infield grass) and is in possession of an infielder in fair territory, it is a delayed dead ball. Runners advance at their own risk. If a runner has reached the halfway point between bases, he/she can advance safely. If he/she has not reached the halfway point and reaches the next base safely, he/she must return to the base from which he/she came. If a runner is put out, he/she is out.
- e. Advancement on an Overthrow: On overthrows after a batted ball, runners may advance one base at their own risk. If a runner attempts more than 1 base and is put out, he/she is out. If a runner attempts more than 1 base and reaches safely, he/she must return to the base that would have been 1 base. Runners may only attempt to advance on the first overthrow of a play, not any subsequent overthrow.
- f. Mandatory Position Rotation: During the regular season, no player may play more than 3 innings at 1 position. During playoffs, players may play more than 3 innings at 1 position.
- g. Defensive Requirements

- i. **Minimum Play**. Every player must play at least 4 full defensive innings of every game. A full inning is from the first pitch of the inning until the last out of the inning. **No player may sit 2 defensive innings before everyone has sat at least 1 defensive inning.**
- ii. **Infield**: All players must play an infield position (pitcher, catcher, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or shortstop) at least 2 innings per game. Exemptions may be made for safety reasons, but they must be approved by the League Commissioner.
- iii. **Violations**:
  1. If for any reason a player does not play at least 4 full innings defensively, for the team's next game that player must play the entire game.
  2. For violations of this rule: first offense, manager warned; second offense, manager serves one-game suspension; third offense, manager is reviewed by the Player Agent, League Commissioner, Director of Baseball Operations, and the President.
  3. Violations of this rule in the playoffs will result in forfeiture of the game. The protest must be made by the opposing team prior to the end of the game to the American League Commissioner.
  4. These rules do not apply to complete games that are shortened for any reason (time limit, weather, power outage, etc.), but does apply to games in which the home team does not bat in the bottom of the sixth.

h. **Free Defensive Substitution**. A player may enter the game at any defensive position (except pitcher – regular pitching rules apply) in any inning, independent of the current batting order.

## 5. Batting

- a. **No “On Deck” Swings**: Under no circumstances shall on deck swings be permitted inside or outside the dugout. Managers must enforce this. Any coach caught assisting, permitting, or failing to pay attention enough to stop this will be suspended one game and reviewed for possible additional disciplinary action.
- b. **Continuous Batting Order**: Per Little League Rules, teams will always use a continuous batting order, meaning all players are in the batting order. There are no offensive substitutions.
- c. **If a player arrives late** to a game (after the first pitch of the game has been thrown), he/she must bat last in the lineup. If a player does not bat for any reason, the player is simply skipped in the batting order and no out is taken. All instances of a player not batting must be reported to the league commissioner who will determine whether the reason was justified, and if not, will consult with the Player Agent, Director of Baseball Operations, and Vice President on next steps.
- d. **No Butcher Boy**. No batter may fake a bunt and then swing away on the same pitch. Batters who do this are automatically called out.
- e. **No Bunting**
- f. **Must Mix Up Batting Order**: Manager must mix up the batting order so no player bats last every game.

g. USA Bats: In accordance with Little League, all bats must be stamped with the “USA Baseball” logo.

## 6. Baserunning and Stealing

- a. Speed Up Runner Rule: If there are 2 outs and a base runner is designated as the team’s catcher for the next inning, the offensive team may substitute the player who made the last out as the speed-up runner. At any time that a baserunner is designated as the team’s next pitcher to enter the game during a kid-pitch inning (not one that has already pitched), the offensive team may substitute the last player to be called out as a speed-up runner.
- b. Leading: Baserunners may not take a lead until the pitch crosses home plate.
- c. STEALING: Each batter/runner is permitted to steal 1 base per inning. There is no limit on the number of steals that a team can have in an inning. Steals of home not permitted. If a runner advances on a wild pitch or passed ball, that counts as that runner’s steal for the inning. If a courtesy runner is used, that new base runner assumes the steals of the player he/she replaced.
- d. No Delayed Steals: Runners may attempt to steal only immediately after a pitch has crossed home plate. Runners may not steal during or after the catcher’s (1) return throw to the pitcher, or (2) attempt at throwing out another runner who attempted to steal.
- e. Overthrows By The Catcher: No advances on an overthrow from the catcher. If a runner attempts to steal a base and the catcher overthrows the fielder at the base the runner is attempting to steal, the runner may not advance beyond that base.
- f. Attempted Pick-off by Catcher: If the catcher tries to make a play on a runner taking a lead off a base (pick-off), the runner may attempt to advance a base, except home (no steals of home). If the runner does advance in this manner, it DOES count as that player’s steal. If the runner has already stolen a base in that inning, he/she may not advance in this manner. No other runners may advance. If a pickoff is attempted and the next base is occupied, the runner on whom the pickoff was made may NOT advance, regardless of whether there is an overthrow.
- g. Contact with Baserunners: Coaches may not touch baserunners. If a coach touches a base runner, the runner is out. On a second offense, the coach shall be ejected from the game.
- h. Infield Fly Rule is NOT in effect.

## MISCELLANEOUS RULES

1. Time Limit. No new inning may be started after 1-hour and 45-minutes after the *actual* start time. Any inning started prior to that time limit will be completed, even if that game exceeds two hours.
2. Four-Run Rule: For the first 5 innings of the game, a team may score no more than 4 runs in an inning. There is one exception: if a batter hits a fair ball over the fence, all runners and the batter are permitted to score. For the 6th inning, or whichever inning is determined to be the final inning, there is no limit on scoring. (Note: There is no 10-run rule for American League Games.)

3. Missing Players. If a player quits, sustains an injury that will cause him to miss two or more games, or is absent from two consecutive games for any reason (including vacations, illness, etc.), the team's manager must report the player to the Commissioner.
4. Substitute Players. Coaches should make a good faith effort to replace missing players so that both teams will have an equal ( $\pm 1$ ) number of players. In the playoffs, it is mandatory that both teams have exactly the same number of players.
  - a. Subs may not play more defensive innings than anyone on the team's regular roster.
  - b. Subs may not pitch.
  - c. Coaches must follow the Pitching and Catching rule above. If a sub has pitched 41 or more pitches earlier in the day for his/her rostered team, the sub cannot catch.
5. Player Issues. All player issues—such as disciplinary issues, absence from multiple practices/games, etc.—must be reported by the team manager to the League Commissioner and the Player Agent. In such instances, the manager may issue a warning to the player (along with informing the player's parents and the League Commissioner). If the situation persists after the warning, the manager may request a suspension of the player from the Player Agent, League Commissioner, Director of Baseball Operations, and the President.
6. Ejection. If a manager or coach gets ejected from a game he/she must not be present at the facility for the remainder of the game and for the entirety of the team's next game.
7. Cancellations. If a game is rained out or cancelled, the game must be played at the next available make-up date (the next rain date on the schedule). The game will be rescheduled by the League Commissioner and the Scheduler. A game is official and will not be rescheduled if 4 innings (3.5 if the home team is winning) are played.
8. No Extra Innings: Regular season games can end in a tie if tied after 6 innings or at the time limit. Playoff games will go to extra innings if necessary.
9. Post-Season Play:
  - a. All regular season rules pertain to playoffs, except where noted.
  - b. Playoff seeding will be determined by drawing from a hat.
  - c. The playoff format is double elimination.
  - d. Home and Away shall be determined by coin flip for all games regardless of seed until the championship game(s). In the Championship Game, the team coming out of the Winner's Bracket shall have the choice to be Home or Away. If a second game is forced, then the winner of the first championship game has the choice to be Home or Away.
  - e. Playoff rosters must have equal players for both teams, a team can not play with 9 if the opponent has 10.