

PNLL Local Rules for Spring/Fall

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Record of Release

Version	Reason for Update	Board Approval Date	Effective Date
2025 Initial	2025 Spring Season	February 10, 2025	February 11, 2025

In this document are the local rules for the 2025 season that will apply to the Poway National Little League (PNLL). Selected standard Little League rules are included for emphasis and importance. It is the responsibility of each manager to comply with the Official Playing Rules of Little League Baseball and Poway National Little League.

All rules presented in this document have been expanded on, summarized, or duplicated from the 2024 Little League Baseball Rulebook (with Significant Updates for 2025). The selection of the rules presented in this document are due to the significance or frequency of discussion. The 2024 Little League Baseball Rulebook (with Significant Updates for 2025) supersedes this document.

For rule implementation, the following list identifies the rule sets that are used in the approach to defining the type of baseball played at each division:

- The Tee Ball division follows “Tee Ball Baseball” rules
- The Rookie division generally follows “Tee Ball Baseball” rules with the use of “Coach Pitch Minor League Baseball” rules when dealing with batters and base runners
- The MAPS division transitions players from “Tee Ball Baseball” to “Machine Pitch Minor League Baseball” rules with some Tee Ball “approach” rules left available (i.e., coaches on the field)
- The Minor B division uses “Player Pitch Minor League Baseball” or “Coach Pitch Minor League Baseball” rules depending on who is pitching
- The Minor A division uses “Player Pitch Minor League Baseball” rules.
- The Major division uses “Little League Baseball” rules

Tee Ball games use a tee for the batters and no umpires. Rookie games utilize coach pitching to deliver pitches and no umpires. MAPS games use a pitching machine to deliver pitches and umpires. Tee Ball, Rookie, and MAPS games will include the Pitcher and Catcher positions for defense. Minor B games are player pitched, coach pitch is allowed to be used to supplement player pitching during the initial portion of the season. The initial portion term will be determined by the coaches and League Development Committee (Player Development Representative, Upper Division Player Agent, Umpire-in-Chief (UIC), Board Member Volunteer, and Coaching Coordinator/Board Member Volunteer) immediately following the draft. Minor A and Major games are player pitched.

1. Recommended Age by Division (with abbreviation definition)

Tee Ball (T): League Age 4 - 6

Rookies ®: League Age 6 - 8

MAPS (MAPS): League Age 6 - 8

Minor B (MB): League Age 7 - 10

Minor A (MA): League Age 9 - 11

Major (M): League Age 10 - 12

Minor A division may have a player who is league age 12 if that player would be a safety concern in the Major division.

2. Behavior

The actions of players, managers, coaches, umpires and league officials must be above reproach. Any player, parent, spectator, manager, coach, umpire or league representative who is involved in a verbal or physical altercation, an incident of unsportsmanlike conduct, or commits any violation of Little League/Poway National Little League Rules, Bylaws, or Code of Conduct at the game site or any other Little League activity including through online or social media, is subject to disciplinary action by the Local league Board of Directors Grievance Committee. (**Regulation XIVa**).

3. Player Assessments and Draft

Player assessments and drafting apply to Minor and Major divisions only.

a) Player Assessment

This information is being finalized.

b) Draft

The draft date will be agreed upon by the PNLL board approved team managers in accordance with the current by laws. One of two PNLL board approved coaches may attend as well, but may be asked to leave if necessary.

The draft method will be in accordance with Little League Policie. The PNLL Board is developing a tailored drafting method using the first and third drafting method approved by Little League.

4. Equipment

2025 Change: Umpires are not required to inspect equipment prior to the start of the game. Managers are responsible for ensuring equipment used in the game is legal and proper. (**Rule 3.01**)

a) Uniform

- i Uniform consists of a league provided shirt/jersey, a league provided hat, and long pants. No shorts are allowed. Number 11 and 42 are retired numbers and may not be used by any PNLL player.

#11 Michael Cammarata – Former LLWS player, fallen 9/11 firefighter

#42 Jackie Robinson – First African-American MLB player

- ii The Pitcher's undershirt, if visible, must be of solid color. If undershirt sleeves are exposed, they must not be white or grey. Pitchers may not wear any items on hands, wrist, or arms that may be distracting to batter. **2025 Change:** Neoprene sleeves are allowed and are not required to be covered as long as they are solid color and not white or grey. (**Rule 1.11(3)**)
- iii **2025 Change:** Jewelry may be worn unless it poses harm or injury (**Rule 1.11j**).

b) Catchers Equipment

The catcher must wear a catcher's mitt (not a first baseman's mitt or fielder's mitt) (**Rule 1.12**). Catchers must wear the metal, fibre or plastic type cup, a chest protector with pelvic guard and neck collar, shin guards, and a catcher's helmet and mask with a "dangling" type throat guard. The catcher's helmet must bear the NOCSAE stamp. Skull caps are not permitted (**Rule 1.17**).

c) Bats

Rule 1.10 discusses bats and should be understood by all Managers and Coaches as they are, as of 2025, responsible for ensuring that the proper equipment is being used.

2025 Change: A clarification was released stating, “products, such as, but not limited to, choke-knobs, choke-up assists, or thumb protectors are considered alterations to the bat and are not permitted.”

5. Games

a) Responsibilities, Field, and Dugout

PNLL uses fields that are located on Poway Unified School District (PUSD) property. All guidance in this section is based on PNLL Board and PUSD Guidance.

- i The home team shall prepare the field for play
- ii The home team is responsible for ensuring an adult is identified as the Game Coordinator and someone is responsible for running the Game Changer application
- iii The visiting team shall retire the field
- iv The visiting team is responsible for identifying someone to run the scoreboard (when available) and recording the pitch count
- v Each team is responsible to ensure their dugout and surrounding area is clean before they leave the field.
- vi No food is allowed in the dugout, sunflower seeds and gum are acceptable

The PNLL Board will revoke the allowance of gum in the dugout if gum is being disposed of anywhere else (bench, concrete, fence, field, etc.) but the trash cans

- vii The visiting team of the last game of the day shall be responsible for pulling the trash bags and tying the top and leaving it by the trash can and putting in the new trash bag left on the handle. This is to help expedite the closing process for the board member in charge that night

b) Adults in the Dugout

One manager and no more than two (2) rostered coaches shall be allowed in the dugout at any time. Two (2) adult coaches are authorized to base coach as long as there is a rostered adult coach in the dugout at all times. All divisions except Major and the Minor divisions may have up to three (3) coaches. (**Rule 3.17 in combination with other rules**)

c) Minimum Players to Start

- i A game may not be started with less than eight (8) (**Local League Option**) players on each team. If a game cannot be started due to the inability of either team to field eight players, this shall not be grounds for automatic forfeiture, but shall be referred to the Board for a decision (**Rule 4.16a**).
- ii If, after a game begins, either team is unable to field at least eight (8) players (**Local League Option**) according to **Rule 4.17**, this shall NOT be grounds for automatic forfeiture. The game shall be suspended and referred to the Board for a decision (**Rule 4.17**).
- iii **PNLL Board Guidance:** If a team cannot field eight (8) players for a game due to a school-related or religious function, the manager in good faith must notify the President and/or Vice President with 48 hours notice. The decision to reschedule the game shall be considered and rendered by the PNLL Board.

d) Fielding Team

- i All players not fielding a position must remain in the dugout during play. (**Rule 3.17**)
- ii During a pitching change (middle of the inning) there will be no balls thrown around the infield.
- iii Managers and Coaches must remain in the dugout except to confer with a player or umpire and only after receiving permission from the umpiring crew. (**Regulation XIVd**) **MAPS, Rookie, and Tee Ball:** Managers and Coaches are allowed on the field for instructional purposes, but cannot assist runners or touch a live ball. (**Regulation XIVd Exception**).
- iv **Rookie and Tee Ball Divisions:** The side is retired due to 3 outs or when all players have batted one time

e) Pitching Rules

- i Any player, who has played the position of catcher in four (4) or more innings in a game, is not eligible to pitch on the same day. (**Regulation VIa**)
- ii Once a pitcher throws 21 or more pitches they may not play catcher during the same day. (**Regulation VIa**)
- iii If the pitcher reaches their limit while facing the batter they may finish pitching to that batter until they reach base or are put out. (**Regulation VIc**)
- iv **Minor A:** A League age player of twelve (12) is not eligible to pitch. (**Regulation VIj**)
- v Regulation VI, Paragraph c presents the pitch count limitations by age.
- vi Regulation VI, Paragraph d presents the rest requirements by pitch count.

- vii Illegal Pitches (balks) are charged to the pitcher's pitch count. **(Rule 8.05)**

PNLL Board Guidance: It is recommended that all Managers and Coaches read Regulation VI to ensure they understand pitching rules.

The Official Scorekeeper will be responsible for keeping count of a player's pitches, and notify the team manager when a player is within 10 pitches of his/her limit, should the official scorekeeper forget to do this, this does not absolve the manager of the responsibility of knowing his pitch counts. The manager is ultimately responsible. The Official Scorekeeper will also notify the manager when a player has reached his pitch count. It is also highly recommended that a coach or parent keep count of a player's pitches as well. It is required that each manager after the game verify, by initialing the official score book that they have the same pitch counts that the Official Scorekeeper has. If there is a conflict you can discuss it with the Official Scorekeeper and if he/she agrees then the pitch counts can be adjusted accordingly, however, the Official Scorekeeper has the ultimate decision. Once the official scorekeeper has signed off the book, records become official and mandatory rest periods will be observed for the pitchers based on the official score keeper's records.

It is the responsibility of each manager to ensure the pitching rules are followed. We want to ensure the pitcher's health is not at risk. The Vice President is also responsible to ensure compliance. If a pitcher is discovered to have violated the days rest in an outing, the manager will be reprimanded at the discretion of the Board.

- viii **MAPS:** A pitching machine will be used and set at 40 feet from home plate, anchored in at the marked location on the dirt, and 'dialed in' so it throws the ball in a relatively flat trajectory that passes through the strike zone for an average sized rookie player standing in the batter's box at home plate.

It is the responsibility of the coach or manager operating the pitching machine to ensure that players remain off the pitching mound and remain proper distance from the pitching machine.

Any ball put into play by a batter that comes into contact with the pitching machine shall be ruled a dead ball and the batter shall be awarded first base.

Each batter is allowed five (5) quality pitches

- ix **Rookie:** A Coach will pitch to the batters. Each batter will be allowed three (3) quality pitches. If after three (3) pitches the player does not hit the ball, the Tee will be used and the batter will continue until a fair ball is hit.

f) Batting Team and Per Inning Run Limits

- i There is no 'on-deck' position (**Rule 1.08 Note 1**) and only the first batter of each half-inning is permitted outside of the dugout between half innings (**Rule 1.08 Note 2**).
- ii Only the batter, base runners, and base coaches are allowed on the field during play. On-deck batters shall not be allowed on the field. All other players must remain in the dugout during play. (**Regulation XIV**)
- iii If playing with eight (8) players, no penalty will be assessed due to the lack of a ninth batter (**Rule 4.04 Local League Option**).
- iv **Major Division:** The "dropped third strike" rule only applies to the Majors division. The batter may attempt to occupy first base if a runner is not on the base and there are less than two (2) outs. If there are two outs, the "force" rule is applied for all runners. (**Rule 6.05b**)
- v **Minor Divisions and MAPS Division:** The side is retired due to 3 outs, when all players have batted one time, or when 5 runs have been scored. **Minor Divisions:** The 5 run rule is suspended for the last half inning for either team (**Rule 5.07 and Local League Option**).
- vi **Rookie and Tee Ball Divisions:** The side is retired due to 3 outs or when all players have batted one time (**Rule 5.07**).
- vii **MAPS, Rookie, and Tee Ball Divisions:** Runner(s) may only advance one base at their own risk on an overthrow that remains in play. (**Rule 7.05i Note 2**)
- viii Base stealing is not allowed when a coach is pitching, a pitching machine is being used, or in the Tee Ball division. **Tee Ball:** runners must stay in contact with the base until the ball is hit off of the tee. Runners must stay in contact with the base until the ball reaches the batter or is hit (**Rule 7.13**).
- ix **Tee Ball:** bunting and half-swings are not allowed.

PNLL Board Guidance: Bunting should be limited to player pitch at the Minor A and Major divisions only.
- x **PNLL Board Guidance:** No player in the dugout may have a bat in hand. The batter is the only person that should have a bat in hand.

g) Continuous Batting Order, Courtesy Runners, and Substitutions

- i The continuous batting order will be used where everyone who is present for the game will be in the batting order for that game. If a player must be skipped due to absence after the start of the game, no penalty will be enforced and the player may return to their spot in the batting order. If a player arrives after the game has started, that player will be added to the end of the lineup at the Manager's discretion, and held to the minimum play rules. (**Rule 4.04 and Local League Option**)

On defense, there are free substitutions

On offense, a courtesy runner may be used in the case of an injury to a base runner. **2025 Change:** A courtesy runner may be used for the pitcher and/or catcher when there are two (2) outs (**Rule 3.04 Local League Option**). Courtesy runner(s) must be the last out(s) and must be placed in order, refer to **Rule 3.04, Note 3**

h) Mandatory Playing Time

- i **Mandatory Play Rule (see Regulation IV for more detail related to Mandatory Play):** In any regulation game (**See Regulation Game and Time Restrictions of this document**), a player must participate for a minimum of six (6) defensive outs and at least one (1) at bat.

PNLL Board Guidance: It is recommended that when five (5) defensive innings are played, each player participates for at least nine (9) defensive outs; and when six (6) defensive innings are played, each player participates for at least 12 defensive outs. **Minor divisions:** It is recommended that all players play at least one (1) inning in an infield position.

- ii A player who does not reach the Mandatory Play Rule shall start the next scheduled game, play any previous requirement not completed, and meet the requirement of the current game before being removed. The manager will be penalized in accordance with **Regulation IVi**.
- iii A player must start and complete the inning in order for that inning to count towards the Mandatory Play rule. See Regulation IV, Paragraph i, Note 3 for an expansion of this rule.

PNLL Board Guidance: It is recommended that all Managers and Coaches read **Regulation IVi** to ensure they understand the Mandatory Play rule.

i) Regulation Game and Time Restrictions

- i Infield practice will be limited to 10 minutes per team as time permits
- ii **Regulation Game:** The requirements for a regulation game have been met when one of the following have reached:
 - A minimum of four innings, 3 ½ when the home team is ahead, have been played; and the applicable time curfews have been reached or a run rule has been met (**Rule 4.10**)
 - A maximum of 6 innings, 5 ½ when the home team is ahead, have been played (**Rule 4.10**)
 - Time limit(s) have been met (**Rule 4.10**)
- iii If a game is tied after six completed innings, play shall continue until the tie has been broken (**Rule 4.10b**).
- iv If a game is called before it has reached regulation (e.g., due to weather or curfew), it shall be resumed where it left off (**4.10d**)
- v If a regulation game is called and is tied (e.g., due to weather or curfew), it shall be resumed where it left off (**4.11e**)
- vi If a game is called during an incomplete inning (e.g., due to weather or curfew), and it is within regulation, the score will revert to the last completed inning (**Rule 4.11d**).
- vii **Major Division:** All games will be played to their completion when the requirements of a regulation game or run rule have been met. No new inning shall start after 8:45 p.m., and under no circumstances will a game be allowed to continue past 9:15 p.m (**Curfew**).
- viii **Minor Divisions:** No new inning may start after one (1) hour and forty five (45) minutes (**Rule 4.10c and Local League Option**). The time limit is calculated from the start time not to exceed 15 minutes from the scheduled start time. Any inning started before the time limit, must be completed to be considered regulation. The game will be considered regulation no matter the number of innings played or if the game is tied as long as the time limit has been reached (**Rule 4.11d and Local League Option**). **Minor A Division:** Under no circumstances will a game be allowed to continue past 9:00 p.m (**Curfew**).
- ix **MAPS Division:** Games will not exceed six (6) innings or one (1) hour and forty five (45) minute time limit.
- x **Rookie and T-Ball Divisions:** Games will not exceed four (4) innings or (1) hour and thirty (30) minute time limit.

j) Run Rule

Major and Minor A Divisions: If after one of the criteria below are met, the Manager of the team with the least runs will concede the victory to the opponent (**Rule 4.10e**).

Three (3) innings, 2 ½ innings if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of fifteen (15) runs or more

Four (4) innings, 3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of ten (10) runs or more

Five (5) innings, 4 ½ innings if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of ten (8) runs or more

All other Divisions: No Run Rule is in effect

6. Major and Minor Divisions Spring Playoff Tournament

All teams will be eligible for the playoff tournament for their division and are guaranteed at least one playoff game.

Teams will be seeded according to regular season standings (**all games**). In case of a seeding tie, the head to head record will be used; if a tie remains, the lowest average runs scored against will be used; if a tie still remains, a coin toss will be used.

The playoffs will be played in one of two formats.

- a)** A double elimination format tournament held at the end of the season. A double-elimination tournament is broken into two sets of brackets, generally called the winner's bracket and the loser's bracket. Each team begins in the winner's bracket, but with one loss, goes into a loser's bracket, where they will have to play their way back.
- b)** A best of three games series format. In this format, the teams are matched in the bracket based on seeding from the regular season in a best of three series. The winner moves on to play in the next round.

The winner of each tournament will be crowned the PNLL League Champion for the respective division. Each division champion will represent PNLL in the City Championship against Poway American Little League (PALL) for that Spring.

7. All Star Team Selection

All star selection applies to Minor and Major divisions only.

a) Player Selection

This information is being finalized.