

AAA Division

A. General

1. These WLALL AAA Division Rules are in addition to Little League Official Rules. To the extent the following rules contradict the Little League Official Rules, the WLALL rules are controlling.
2. The AAA division is an instructional league. The goal is to prepare the players for the WLALL Majors division by teaching baseball skills. The emphasis should not be on winning, but rather playing the right way through good sportsmanship, consistency, hustle, and being a good teammate. Winning should be a by-product of those teachings.
3. All managers and coaches must be patient and exercise restraint with the umpires. The Code of Conduct is for the parents, players, managers, and coaches. Any form of bad sportsmanship from managers, coaches, parents, or players will not be tolerated and may be cause for expulsion or suspension.

B. Pool Players

1. It is the responsibility of the Manager to have at least nine (9) players present at the start of play and for the duration of the game. During the regular season, the Manager shall request pool players from the AAA commissioner promptly on learning their team will or may have fewer than nine (9) players for a game. The AAA Commissioner shall use best efforts to recruit one or more pool players as needed so the team will have nine (9) players for the game. Pool players shall be assigned by the AAA Commissioner in their discretion. Pool players, once assigned, may not be canceled by the Manager within 48 hours of the scheduled game time without the express prior permission of the AAA Commissioner or league President. Pool players may not be utilized during the playoffs.
2. Managers shall not recruit pool players without the express prior permission of the AAA Commissioner; provided, however, Managers may recruit directly upon notifying the AAA Commissioner that the team may not have nine (9) players within two (2) hours of the scheduled game time.
3. Each assigned pool player must play the entire game regardless of team members arriving before or during the game. Pool players must bat last in the batting order. Pool players may not play the positions of pitcher, catcher, or infielder; however, pool players may play infield if a team has four (4) or more pool players for the game.
4. Pool players may not be intentionally walked under any circumstances.

C. Pre-Game

1. Teams shall allow the grounds crew to prepare the field without interference. The visiting team shall be allowed access to the field for ten (10) minutes of on-field warm-up. The visiting team shall be ready to take the field for its warm-up thirty (30) minutes before the scheduled game time and its 10-minute period shall start then or as soon as the grounds crew completes field preparation. The home team shall then have access for ten (10) minutes of on-field warm-up. If less than twenty (20) minutes remains before the scheduled game time, the teams shall split the on-field warm-up time equally. Opposing team players shall remain off the field during a team's on-field warm ups.
2. Each Manager shall deliver their lineup card to the opposing team's Manager and a league-sanctioned GameChanger/scorekeeper before the scheduled game time. Players shall be identified by uniform number and first and last name.
3. Managers shall meet with the umpires at home plate at least five (5) minutes before the scheduled game time to discuss ground rules. During this meeting, the umpires and Managers should agree on the official start time for the game and the 1 hour 40-minute mark after which the last inning shall begin (1 hour 55 minutes for playoff games).
4. The Little League pledge shall be recited before the game begins.

D. During the Game

1. All games shall be played in accordance with Little League Official Rules, except as modified by these rules. Managers may not change the rules by agreement. Rule changes for any game must be approved in advance by the league President and/or Board of Directors.
2. A rostered player (not a pool player) may be intentionally walked only one (1) time during a game, regardless of how many innings are played. A team can still walk a player with four pitched balls, but it cannot be a second "intentional" walk.
3. Scheduled start time. The game shall start at its scheduled time or earlier if all available players and umpires are present and ready to begin play.
4. The 8-player rule. If a team has only eight (8) players at the start of the game, and every effort to secure a pool player has failed, a team may play the game. A team with fewer than 8 players at the start of play or during the game must forfeit the game.

Notes:

- a. The game counts in the standings. All stats count.
- b. The 8-player rule is for both the regular season and postseason.

- c. During the regular season only, the team with eight (8) may, but is not required to unless mandated by the umpire, borrow a defensive player from the opposing team. Borrowed players shall only play defense for the opposing team; and shall not bat for the opposing team.
 - d. During the postseason, a team with eight (8) players may not borrow a defensive player under any circumstances.
- 5. A team must be able to place at least one adult in the dugout as Manager or Acting Manager.
- 6. Only the Manager or Acting Manager shall engage the umpires during the game.
- 7. Dugouts. The home team occupies the 3rd base dugout. The only persons allowed in the dugout and on the field are the players, the Manager, and up to two (2) league-approved coaches. The Manager and coaches shall not enter the field of play during the game except to coach bases, attend to injured players, report substitutions or position changes, and after time out has been called. The Manager or at least one (1) coach must remain in the dugout with the players at all times during the game. The Manager or one (1) coach may stand or sit in the opening to the dugout during play unless the umpire requires them to be in the dugout. If one or more of the Manager and two (2) official team coaches is absent, parent volunteers may fill-in if they have completed the league required background check and been approved by the league in advance. Players with helmets may coach the bases.
- 8. Pitching, Pitch Count, Catching, Manager Visits.

Manager Visits

8.06 - This rule, which applies to each pitcher who enters a game, governs the visits of the manager or coach to the pitcher at the mound.

(a) - A manager or coach may come out twice in one inning to visit with the pitcher, but the third time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher.

Example: If a manager visits Pitcher A once in the first inning, then makes a pitching change in the same inning, Pitcher B would be allowed one visit in that inning before being removed on the second visit.

(b) - A manager or coach may come out three times in one game to visit with the pitcher, but the fourth time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher.

(c) - A manager or coach may confer with any other player(s), including the catcher, during the visit with the pitcher. A manager or coach who is granted a time out to talk to any defensive player will be charged with a visit to the pitcher.

Subject to the pitch count limitations below, no player may pitch for more than nine (9) recorded outs per game regardless of the number of pitches thrown. New pitchers entering the game may throw no more than eight (8) warm-up pitches consuming no

more than two (2) minutes and the pitcher who starts the inning should warm up in the bullpen prior to the inning. Pitchers who pitched the previous inning shall be allowed no more than five (5) warm up pitches in between innings. A pitcher, regardless of whether they are under the pitch count limits, may not pitch again in the same game after they are removed from the position. Pitchers always remain subject to the Little League daily pitch count limits and requirements for days of rest. Little League 12 year-olds may not pitch in AAA.

Regulation VI Pitchers

a. - Any player on a regular season team may pitch (other than a Little League 12).

Exception: Any player who has played the position of catcher in four (4) or more innings in a game is not eligible to pitch on that calendar day.

A player who played the position of catcher for three (3) innings or less, moves to the pitcher position, and delivers 21 pitches or more in the same day, may not return to the catcher position on that calendar day.

EXCEPTION: If the pitcher reaches the 20-pitch limit while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch, and maintain their eligibility to return to the catcher position, until any one of the following conditions occur: (1) that batter reaches base; (2) that batter is retired; (3) the third out is made to complete the half-inning or the game; or (4) the pitcher is removed from the mound prior to the batter completing his/her at-bat.

A.R. – The catcher receiving one pitch to a batter in the fourth inning constitutes having caught four (4) innings. Warm-up pitches do not count, only when the ball is live will the pitches count toward innings caught.

b. - A pitcher once removed from the mound cannot return as a pitcher.

c. - The manager must remove the pitcher when said pitcher reaches the limit for his/her age group as noted below, but the pitcher may remain in the game at another position:

League Age

11-12: 85 pitches per day

9-10: 75 pitches per day

6-8: 50 pitches per day

EXCEPTION:

(1) that batter reaches base; (2) that batter is retired; (3) the third out is made to complete the half-inning or the game; or (4) the pitcher is removed from the mound prior to the batter completing his/her at-bat.

NOTE: If a pitcher reaches 40 pitches while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch, and maintain their eligibility to play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day, until any one of the following conditions occurs:

(1) that batter reaches base; (2) that batter is retired; (3) the third out is made to complete the half-inning or the game; or (4) the pitcher is removed from the mound prior to the batter completing his/her at-bat.

The pitcher would be allowed to play the catcher position provided that pitcher is moved, removed, or the game is completed before delivering a pitch to another batter. If a player delivers 41 or more pitches, and is not covered under the *threshold exception*, the player may not play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day.

NOTE 1: Under no circumstance shall a player pitch in three (3) consecutive days.

NOTE 2: A pitcher's pitch count for the purposes of day(s) rest threshold is determined by the first pitch thrown to a batter. The pitcher may not start a new batter once the limit imposed in Regulation VI(c) has been met.

9. Batting. All players shall bat, and batting shall be done in continuous order. A player arriving after official play has started shall bat at the end of the batting order and if arriving before play begins for the 4th inning play for a minimum of six defensive outs. A player arriving after play begins for the 4th inning shall play without a mandatory play requirement and at the Manager's discretion. A batter who cannot start or complete an at-bat due to injury shall be removed from the game and the next batter in order shall take the injured player's at-bat starting with a fresh count. Dropped 3rd strikes are NOT in play in AAA. If the opposing Manager suspects a player is using an illegal bat, they may challenge the player's bat as illegal only after the at-bat ends and before the next at-bat begins. If the umpire upholds the challenge, the batter shall be ruled out, runners shall return to the bases occupied before the at-bat, and the bat shall be removed from the game. If a batter throws their bat, the batter shall receive a warning upon the first occurrence. If the same player throws their bat again during the same game, the player may be ejected for safety purposes at the umpire's discretion. If a player is ejected for unintentionally throwing their bat, the mandatory one-game suspension rule shall not apply. If an umpire determines a batter threw their bat intentionally and the player was ejected without warning, rule 4.07 shall apply. In any event, in the case of a thrown bat, the play shall be allowed to continue to its natural end, the result of the play shall stand, and any ejection shall take place after the play's conclusion. Further, an out shall not be awarded solely as the result of a thrown bat, but may be awarded in accordance with Rule 6.05(g) which provides that interference shall be called and the batter shall be out when a batter has thrown their bat and it interferes with a defensive player's attempt to make a play.

10. Stealing. Stealing of any base is allowed. Baserunners may not leave contact with a base until the ball has reached the batter. Leadoffs are prohibited. If the umpire determines that a baserunner left a base prior to the ball reaching the batter, LL Rule 7.13 shall be enforced.

11. Sliding. Rule 7.08(3 & 4): There is no must slide rule. The runner is out when the runner does not slide or attempt to get around a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to make the tag or the runner slides head first while advancing.

12. Run Cap/Mercy Rule. Five (5) runs per half inning is the maximum runs allowed until the last inning of the game, which is an open inning with no run limit. For the avoidance of doubt, no runs more than five (5) runs will count in any inning that is not the open inning. The game shall end and the team ahead shall be declared the winner without further play when:

(a) the home team is ahead by 15 runs or more after completion of 3 ½ innings or the visiting team is ahead by 15 runs or more after completion of 4 innings; or

(b) the home team is ahead by 10 runs or more after completion of 4 ½ innings or the visiting team is ahead by 10 runs or more after completion of 5 innings. The mercy rule applies during the regular season and playoffs.

13. Time and Time Limits. During the regular season (and pre-season), the last inning, if not the 6th inning, shall be the inning commencing after 1 hour and 40 minutes of official playing time. During the regular season, no game shall exceed six (6) innings; provided, however, that extra innings shall be played as necessary to declare a winner subject to the time limit, and the game may end in a tie. During the playoffs, the last inning, if not the 6th inning, shall be the inning commencing after 1 hour and 55 minutes of official playing time; provided, however, that extra innings shall be played as necessary to declare a winner with no time limit, and the game may not end in a tie.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, a complete game requires a minimum of four (4) innings of official play. If the first three (3) innings have not been completed in the first sixty (60) minutes of official playing time, there shall be no further defensive warm-ups between innings with the pitcher limited to three (3) warm-up pitches.

14. Courtesy Runner 7.14 (b) In the interest of time, a courtesy runner may be used to replace the catcher of record when there are two outs. The courtesy runner must be the player who made the last out.

Managers shall avoid delays between innings caused by catchers putting on gear and follow best practice by designating one coach as being responsible for having the catcher dressed and ready to warm up the pitcher when the side is retired. While the catcher is getting equipped, another player may warm up the pitcher while wearing a catcher's mask with a dangling throat guard and catcher's glove.

15. Managers and Coaches may warm up pitchers on the field or in the bullpen.
16. Safety. Base coaches must be adults (Coach or Manager); however, if there two or fewer adults (Coaches and Manager) present, a player may coach 1st or 3rd base and must wear a helmet. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a Manager may elect to have player base coaches so long as they wear a helmet and do not go onto the field until defensive warmups have concluded. All male players shall wear athletic supporters. Male catchers must wear metal or plastic cups. All catchers must wear helmets and use a long-model chest protector. The bullpens in left and right field may be used to warm up pitchers during official play, but only when an additional player with a glove and helmet stands in front of the bullpen mound to protect the pitcher and catcher warming up. There is no on-deck circle in Little League; only the player at bat may hold a bat. All players of the batting team, except for the batter and baserunners (and base coaches when applicable), must remain in the dugout.
17. Mandatory Play Requirements.
 - A. Each player on the team roster and present when play commences must play a minimum of four (4) innings of a regulation six-inning game unless the home team does not bat in the 6th inning due to home field advantage in which case players on the visitor team must play a minimum of three (3) innings in the field. Regardless of the length of a game, no player on the team roster and present during a game shall sit out consecutive defensive innings. A player who has sat out for three (3) consecutive defensive outs must play in the field for the next three (3) defensive outs. A player who is sitting out may enter the game at any time for any player other than a player who sat out the previous inning. No player is required to sit out for any number of defensive outs.
 - B. Any player who does not meet his or her mandatory play requirement during a regular season regulation game or game shortened due to home team advantage, mercy rule, or weather shall start the next scheduled game and play a period equal to the remainder of the mandatory play requirement not completed from the prior game, and then play the mandatory play requirement applicable to the current game. The preceding sentence is not applicable to playoff games for a completed regulation game lasting less than a full six innings (e.g. due to home team advantage, mercy rule, or weather). If a half-inning ends because of the imposition of the five-run limit and a player on the defense has played for the entire half-inning, that player will be considered to have participated for three (3) consecutive outs for purposes of this rule.
 - C. The Manager shall report failure of any player to meet a mandatory play requirement for a game to the AAA commissioner within 24 hours after the game ends. Violations of a mandatory play requirement shall result in a written warning to the Manager upon a team's first offense, a Manager suspension for the next scheduled game upon a second offense or the first offense if in the playoffs, and a Manager suspension for the remainder of the season upon a third offense. Penalties in the case of

a violation done for a competitive advantage or other circumstances may include forfeiture of games won as determined by the league President after consultation with the Board and the AAA Commissioner as they deem appropriate.

18. The Manager is responsible for the conduct of the Coaches, parents, and players on their team. Anyone ejected from the game who continues to interfere with the game shall cause the team to forfeit the game. A Manager, Coach, player, or spectator ejected from the game is subject to Little League rule 4.07: When a manager, coach, or player is ejected from a game, they shall leave the field immediately and take no further part in that game. They may not sit in the stands and may not be recalled. A manager or coach ejected from a game must not be present at the game site for the remainder of that game. Any manager, coach, or player ejected from a game is suspended for his or her team's next physically played game and may not be in attendance at the game site. This includes pregame and postgame activities. The person ejected may also be assessed additional penalties as determined by the Discipline Committee.

19. The home team shall keep an official scorebook with player substitutions and pitch counts during all games. The scorebook shall be made available in case of disputes over the score or lineups. The visiting team shall be responsible for operating the scoreboard.

E. Post-Game

1. If the game played is the final game of the day/evening, the home team must return the mat to cover the pitching mound.

2. Each team shall be responsible for cleaning its respective dugout, including throwing trash away.

3. Failure to comply with field and dugout cleanup may cause a team to forfeit one (1) turn at bat during the next game. Repeat violations shall be assessed such additional penalties as determined by the league President after consultation with the Board as they deem appropriate.

F. Playoffs

1. Each team makes the playoffs so long as the team completes its volunteer and other league obligations. Regular season records shall determine the seeding for a double elimination tournament. Specifically, teams will be ranked according to winning percentage, where the teams with the higher winning percentages will have the higher seeding. Winning percentage is determined by the formula $W\% = (\# \text{ wins} + (0.5 * \# \text{ ties})) / \text{total } \# \text{ games played}$. If two or more teams have the same winning percentage, then the seeding between those teams will be determined in order by:

(a) head-to-head record

- (b) average total runs allowed per game played
 - (c) average total runs scored per game played.
2. The team with the higher seeding shall be the home team in all winners' bracket games. In losers' brackets games and the "if" game, the home team shall be determined by coin flip.
 3. The winner of the tournament will be division champions and may represent WLALL in the District 25 Tournament of Champions, should the league choose to participate.

G. Other Rules

1. Only with the prior express approval of the league President may a team carry fewer than 12 players on its roster. A Manager must report excessive player absences to the AAA Commissioner, including if a player misses more than four (4) games for any reason.
2. Violations of the rules shall be punished in a manner as determined by the league President after such consultation with the board as he or she deems appropriate. Managers and Coaches are reminded that volunteer positions are a privilege conferred by the league and not a matter of right.