

## **INDIANOLA LITTLE LEAGUE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **What is Indianola Little League?**

Indianola Little League is a non-profit organization operating since 1957 and serving the families of approximately 550 children. Our League offers a fun, supportive, instructional and competitive baseball experience for boys and girls age 5 to 16 residing in and around Indianola, Iowa. See our website, [www.indianolalittleleague.org](http://www.indianolalittleleague.org), for our boundary map. The program focuses on the development of baseball skills, sportsmanship, and the love of the game in a family-oriented, volunteer environment.

Indianola Little League is chartered by Little League International and is a member of Iowa's District 5. It is managed by an annually-elected all volunteer Board of Directors that operates in accordance with the rules, regulations, and policies of Little League International. Our League is funded by registration fees, fundraising, sponsorship, and individual donations, and is operated solely through volunteer efforts of its general membership.

### **What is the structure of the Indianola Little League Baseball?**

Indianola Little League Baseball is comprised of five Divisions: Teewee (5-to 6-year-olds), Pee wee (machine pitch 7 and 8-year-olds), Minors (player pitch for 9 and 10-year-olds), Intermediate (11, 12 and 13-year-olds, in 7<sup>th</sup> grade), and Seniors (13 year olds, in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and 14 to 16-year-olds).

### **When does the season (games) begin?**

Games in the Minor, Intermediate, and Senior Divisions begin the second week in April. Games for Teewee and Pee wee Divisions begin the first week in May. Check the schedule at [www.indianolalittleleague.org](http://www.indianolalittleleague.org) for complete game schedules.

### **How long will the season last?**

The regular season ends the second week in June. All-Star teams in the Minor, Intermediate, and Senior Divisions begin play the first week in July. Minor, Intermediate, and Senior players also play in the Indianola Little League County tournament the third week in July.

### **Where are the games played?**

All games are played at the Indianola Little League facility located on South 15<sup>th</sup> Street, south of Indianola Middle School.

### **When will practices begin?**

Practices are scheduled for Minor, Intermediate and Senior Division teams beginning the third week in March. Once the season begins, it is up to the individual coaches to determine how often, when, and where practices will be. Teewee and Peewee teams typically begin practicing in the middle of April. There is limited field availability for these practices. Coaches in the younger divisions are encouraged to find other locations to practice, including playgrounds at the local elementary schools.

### **What equipment will a player need to bring to the first practice?**

Players should arrive at their first practice with a glove, a baseball cap, appropriate pants, rubber-molded cleats (Intermediate and Senior players may use steel cleats). Use of an athletic cup is mandatory for the Peewee division and above. Bats, balls, batting helmets, and catchers' gear are provided to each coach by the Indianola Little League. Players may bring their own individual bats, if they wish.

A uniform consisting of a jersey and cap will be provided by the Indianola Little League to each player in each division. Players provide their own pants and uniform socks. The team coach will provide details of what colored style of the pants and socks to complete the uniform.

Molded-rubber cleats are highly recommended for all players at the Minor level and below. Steel cleats are permitted only in the Intermediate and Senior Divisions.

All players should dress appropriately for the weather. A windbreaker, jacket, or sweatshirt should be brought to every game and practice, particularly early in the season. Athletic undershirts are very efficient at providing warmth in cold weather.

Bats and helmets are provided to each team although players may provide their own. If you choose to provide equipment for your player, please check the Indianola Little League and Little League International website for applicable Little League requirements which vary with the level of play.

Check with the concession stand for lost equipment.

### **How are teams selected?**

Mandatory try-outs for players new to the Minor and Intermediate Divisions (and all players new to Indianola Little League) are held the second week in March. Information concerning the date and time for try-outs will be posted on the League website. Following the try-outs, the coaches in those divisions will draft their respective teams. Senior players do not try out, unless they are new to ILL, but are subject to a draft as well. Teevee and Peevee players are assigned to teams by their respective Division commissioner.

### **When will I find out what team my child will play on?**

In the Minor, Intermediate, and Senior Divisions, the coaches will contact the players soon after they are drafted. Teevee, and Peevee coaches will be notified of their teams approximately the third week in April and will contact parents shortly after that. If you do not hear from a coach by April 1, contact the player agent, appropriate Division commissioner or the League president. The contact information for these individuals can be found on the Indianola Little League website.

### **Can a player be asked to be placed on a team with his or her friends or for a particular coach?**

Indianola Little League accepts requests of this type only for players involved in Teevee, and Peevee divisions. Due to Indianola Little League's primary goal of forming competitively-balanced teams, the League will not be able to honor such requests for the Minor, Intermediate and Senior Division.

### **If a player or parent is unhappy with the assigned team, can the player switch teams?**

Only in rare cases does the League allow children to switch teams after the teams have been formed. Such requests must be made in writing to the player agent. Approval requires extenuating circumstances. Typically, there must be a strong and specific reason that a player should not be on a particular team as opposed to a desire to be placed on another particular team. Divisional team balance is established early on and changes of this type are difficult, if not impossible, to implement without upsetting that balance. Also, once teams are established, changing from one team to another requires that another player change teams to keep an equal number of players per team. A parent should raise any concern about team placement, whether involving a specific coach or another player, when registering to play or with the appropriate player agent or commissioner as soon as possible after team assignment.

**If a player decides not to play, is it possible to get a refund?**

If a player decides to withdraw, a refund of a portion of the registration fee is available up to the time of a player's first game. A parent should contact the player agent about the decision not to play and treasurer about a refund.

**How do I determine my child's age for Little League purposes?**

A child's age for Little League is their age as of April 30 for that Little League season. For example, a child who turns 11 on May 5 is a 10-year-old for that season.

**If my child is a talented player, should I consider signing up for a higher division?**

Little League International sets minimum major requirements for certain levels of play and maximum age for the Intermediate and Senior Divisions. You cannot register a player to a division for which he or she does not meet the minimum age requirement.

"Playing up" typically means that a child is at the lowest allowable age of a division instead of falling somewhere in the middle of that division's age range. Most children benefit from playing with others within their age group rather than "playing up" as they will generally get more playing time, have more opportunities to play preferred positions, play with their school-aged peers, and receive opportunities to take on leadership roles. Usually, these things turn out to be more important to the players than what division they play in. While there are some players who may have a more positive experience "playing up", there are many very good players for whom this would be a mistake. For instance, a child might possess the physical skill to "play up" but lack the emotional maturity to relate successfully to older teammates. This can be a difficult decision for a parent to make and it should be one that should be made only after careful consideration. Typically the only division where players are allowed to "play up" are 8 year olds "playing up" into the Minor division.

**How many players are assigned to a team? How many teams are there in a division?**

Typically, no more than 12 players are drafted to any one team. No more than 10 players are assigned to Teepee or Peepee teams. The number of teams in a division depends on the number of players who have registered. Typically, the number of teams per division is between 6 and 12.

**Are there any rules about minimum playing time?**

All divisions, except the Senior Division, of Indianola Little League use a continuous batting order (i.e. bat-the-line up), that tends to equalize the number of at bats for all players. At the Teevee, and Peevee level, all players bat and play the field. In the Minors, 10 players play in the field. In the Intermediate and Senior Divisions, 9 players play in the field. Starting in 2015, ILL adopted Little League Rule 3.03, Mandatory Play. Teams will use a 9 player batting order with mandatory substitution during the game. Substitute players must play 6 consecutive outs and bat at least once during the game.

Specific rules concerning playing time are contained in the General Rules and Policies of the Indianola Little League which are found on our website.

**Can a player be assigned to the same team on which his or her parent is coaching or upon which a sibling is playing?**

It is the policy of Indianola Little League to assign or draft siblings to the same team unless specifically requested not to do so. In addition, parents are encouraged to coach their children's teams.

**Are there time limits on games?**

Teevee and Peevee games are 50 minutes in length. Minor games are 1 hour and 30 minutes; Intermediate and Senior games are 1 hour 45 minutes in length.

**Is there a post-season tournament?**

In the Minor, Intermediate, and Senior Divisions, there is a League tournament the second week in June.

**Who is responsible for staffing the concession stand?**

McConnell Concessions provides the staff for both concession stands.

**Who do I contact if I have a problem that needs to be resolved by the league?**

If any time you have a problem or just want information, please feel free to email the League. We encourage players and parents to first discuss any questions or concerns with the team's coach as might be appropriate. If this does not provide answers or resolve your concern, a parent may communicate with the League's player agent, the respective Division commissioner, or the League president. Contact information is

located on the Indianola Little League website. You are also welcome to attend Board meetings and express your concerns directly to the Board of Directors. Please contact the League president to arrange to be placed on the agenda at the next scheduled Board meeting.

### **What are the responsibilities of the coach and assistants?**

The team coach oversees all aspects of his or her team throughout the season. This responsibility includes conducting parent/player meetings, scheduling practices, developing a practice format, creating a line-up, and establishing field positions for the players every game, participating in League fundraising activities, and complying with all League rules and policies. Coaches are a focal point of the team and must be committed to following through with managing the team from mid-March through mid-June. Time commitment is around 8 to 10 hours a week, depending upon the division. The coach must commit to attend all practices and games. Coaches must also attend a pre-season coaching clinic provided by the League. Coaches are assisted by volunteer parents who help with things like scheduling, uniform distribution, picture day organization, as well as practices. All parents are encouraged to assist the coach.

Up to two assistant coaches are allowed in the dugout during games. However, a coach may elect to use additional practice coaches during team practices. Assistant coaches provide support during practice to ensure that the players get enough attention while developing their skills. Assistant coaches are under the guidance and direction of the head coach.

All coaches and assistants must be approved by the Indianola Little League Board of Directors. All coaches and assistants are required to submit a volunteer application and coach questionnaire, undergo a background check, and be approved by the League in order to participate in the Indianola Little League.

### **Are there conduct rules that apply during games and practices?**

Indianola Little League publishes a Code of Conduct for players, coaches, parents/spectators that is contained in our General Policies and Procedures and is on our website. In general, the League does not provide foul language or taunting by any players, parents, managers, or coaches. No pets are allowed at our fields. Smoking and use of alcoholic beverages is prohibited. This includes the parking lot. Any spectator, player, manager, or coach are subject to being ejected from the premises and banned from the complex for additional games.

**What is available on the League website?**

The league's website is at [www.indianolalittleleague.org](http://www.indianolalittleleague.org). This site offers all information you need to stay informed about events, schedules, rules, Board member contacts, sponsorship information, volunteer information, etc. If you have a question that is still unanswered, please contact a member of the Board of Directors or the League president.

**What about rain outs?**

It is the policy of the Indianola Little League to attempt to postpone games by 3 p.m. on the date the games are scheduled. This is not always possible. Once a decision has been made to postpone games, that information will be immediately posted on the website. It is the policy of Indianola Little League to reschedule postponed games as soon as possible.