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## Inter-League

2020

### Major & Minor Division Ground Rules

#### PURPOSE

To provide every child a chance to learn and play baseball in a fun, safe, supervised environment. One of the main tenets of this program is to encourage children to do their best with their abilities. With an emphasis on positive reinforcement, the program seeks to build confidence and self-esteem in each child.

#### GENERAL

1. Regular season rules listed in the 2020 Official Regulations and Playing Rules for Little League Baseball shall be used except as noted herein. Managers are responsible for knowing and understanding the current Official Regulations and Playing Rules (the Green Rule Book). Any definitions, clarifications or apparent contradictions shall be resolved through the Division Commissioner. Rule Books may be obtained through the Division Commissioner.
2. No food in dugout (exception if there is a medical necessity).  
*No sunflower seeds at Torrance Little League.*
3. Catchers **MUST** wear a protective cup. It is **RECOMMENDED** that all other players wear a protective cup.
4. All volunteers that are assisting in the dugout or on the field **must** have a volunteer form on file.
5. For safety reasons, all persons on the playing field must wear closed toe shoes.
6. Managers & Coaches must stay in the dugout (defined as actual dugout and dirt area immediately in front of the dugout) during game time.  
*\*Major: Maximum of three managers and coaches.*
7. A maximum of 2 coaches may be in the dirt area in front of the dugout at any given time.
8. Players must stay in the protected area of the dugout when not required on the playing field. They may not stand in the doorway of the dugout, and there is no on-deck batter.
9. Base Coaches: Both of the base coaches must be adults.  
*\*Major: A manager may choose to have a Player coach one base and an adult the other, as long as the player wears a batting helmet at all times.*
10. The home team dugout is on the third base side.
11. The official scorekeeper shall be the "Home Team", which shall provide a scorekeeper and a pitch counter.
12. The official game announcer/scoreboard operator shall be the "Visiting Team".
13. Little League pledge before each game shall be led by Home Team player(s)
14. Each team shall provide 2 new balls for each game.
15. The "Code of Conduct" (see Appendix) must be adhered to and will be strictly enforced. The Manager is responsible for all coaches, parents and players associated with his/her team.
16. Game Length is 6 innings. If a game is called for darkness/dusk or weather or time, the final score will revert to the last completed inning, or if the home team is ahead and at bat, the score at that time will stand. Any ties will stand and each team will receive ½ win and ½ loss in the standings.  
*\*Major: Games will be 6 innings or until dusk. If the 6<sup>th</sup> inning ends in a tie, one additional inning will be played. If after 7 innings the game is still tied, the results will stand.*

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*Minor*: Game length will be 6 innings or 2 hours from scheduled game time with no new inning after 1 hour 45 minutes. If after 2 hours the game is not complete, the score will revert to back to the last complete inning (\*or if the home team is ahead in the bottom of the inning, the score will stand).

17. A player may leave early or arrive late as long as the opposing Manager and scorekeeper are notified prior to the start of the game. The player who arrives late will be added at the last spot on the line-up card. The scorekeeper must be notified when the affected player arrives or leaves the game.
18. Managers must provide opposing coach and scorekeepers a line-up with player names and jersey numbers 10 minutes before the start of the game. All players on the team should be noted on the line-up sheet including absent or injured players.
19. The 5/8 rule is in effect for all games. The half-inning will end after 5 runs have scored. However, if after 4 runs have scored, a play results in more than one run scoring, all runs shall be scored, up to a maximum of 8 runs. The exception is the 6th inning, in which there are unlimited runs.  
Exception: *Major*: There is no 5/8 rule. All innings are unlimited.
20. Managers must notify the scorekeeper of all pitcher and/or catcher changes
  - a. Any player that pitches 41 pitches or more cannot catch for the remainder of that game.
  - b. Any player that has played in the catcher position for any portion of 4 innings is not eligible to pitch for the remainder of the game.
21. The official Scorekeeper shall determine what the official pitch count is. \*However, the manager is ultimately responsible for knowing the pitch count.
22. Penalty for using an illegal bat is an automatic out and:
  - a. 1st offense the Manager shall receive a warning
  - b. 2nd offense the Manager shall receive a 1 game suspension
  - c. 3rd offense penalty/ discipline shall be at the discretion of the District Administrator

## **BATTING/BASE RUNNING**

23. Each team shall bat the entire lineup.
  - a. If a player refuses to bat then the “batting out of turn” rules apply (green book rule 6.02 (c)).
24. When the legal batter does not bat in his turn, the penalty depends on whether a play has occurred or not.
  - a. If the improper batter has not completed the at-bat, the proper batter will take his place and assume the current pitch count; there is no other penalty.
  - b. If a play has taken place, and the improper batter is noted before the first pitch to the next batter, the proper batter is declared out, the play is nullified (no advance of runners or scoring). The next batter is the one after the proper batter.
  - c. If a play as taken place and the improper batter is noted AFTER any pitches to the next batter, the results shall stand, and the improper batter becomes the proper batter.
  - d. For a complete discussion of this complex situation, see Little League Rule book, 6.07 for detailed rules and discussion.
25. Bunting. Bunting is allowed
26. Dropped Third Strike Rule. A batter is out when (1) a third strike is legally caught by the catcher; (2) a third strike is not caught by the catcher when first base is occupied before two are out.

Exception: No Dropped Third Strike Rule in *Minor* division.

**Comment:** With first base unoccupied, when a pitch results in a third strike, but the catcher does not cleanly catch the pitch, the batter is not called out (the umpire will call a third strike, but will signal that the batter is safe) and immediately becomes a

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base runner and can attempt to run to first base. The batter will be called out if the defensive team can tag or force him/her out before reaching first, if he/she runs out of the base line, or if the batter leaves the dirt circle around home plate without attempting to run to first base. If first base is occupied with less than two outs the batter is automatically called out on a dropped third strike.

**NOTE:** there is NO dropped third strike if the runner on first with less than 2 outs steals second on the dropped third strike; the batter does not become a legal baserunner and he is out. However, the ball remains live, and any preceding baserunners may advance at their own risk (e.g., if the throw is made to first, preceding baserunners may advance to third or home). It is the defense's responsibility to know when the third strike rule is in effect.

With two outs on a dropped third strike, the batter is not called out regardless of base runners occupying first or any other base. The defensive team must tag or force out any base runner to record the third out on that play. If all runners reach base safely the third out is not recorded.

Not cleanly fielding the pitch" is defined as the ball at some point made contact with the ground after it left the pitchers hand but before the catcher has control of the ball in the glove. This includes bounced pitches and pitches that have fallen out of the glove and made contact with the ground before they are controlled.

27. Base stealing is permitted in upper divisions; however the runner cannot leave the base until the pitched ball crosses home plate.
28. Walks. The batter advances without penalty to first base after 4 balls are thrown
29. Intentional walks are allowed. The defensive Manager must notify the plate umpire of the defense's intent to walk a batter. The ball is dead and the four (4) pitches are added to the pitch count.
30. When the pitcher has possession of the ball, all base runners must immediately proceed to occupy a base (i.e., no "dancing around off of the base."). Base runners remain live and may be picked off or may advance on the throw. Once the base runners occupy a base and the pitcher has possession of the ball, the play is dead and the runner may not leave until the next pitch crosses the plate. The umpire may give warning if necessary.
  - \*\**Major*: the pitcher must have possession of the ball and have one foot on the pitching rubber.
  - \*\**Minor*: the pitcher must have possession of the ball and have both feet wholly or partially in the dirt area of the mound.
31. Overthrow rule. The runner may advance at his risk on any overthrow.
32. Tagging up. A runner may advance to the next base at his own risk once a fly ball is caught/ touched by a fielder.
33. Base runners are to avoid collisions with defensive players whenever possible.
34. Headfirst slides are not permitted and will result in an automatic out. The only exception is when a runner is returning to a base.
35. Defensive players shall keep clear of their base / base path if there is not a play imminent.
36. Catchers' shall stand considerably in front of or behind home plate if there is no play imminent.
37. "Fake" tags by defensive players to induce a runner to slide are not permitted.
38. Players shall slide at second, third base or home plate if a defensive player has the ball and is waiting to make a tag or when a play is imminent. The runner will be called out if they do not slide and the umpires shall have ultimate judgment.
39. After entering the batter's box, the batter must remain in the box with at least one foot throughout the at bat.
  - Exceptions:
    1. On a swing, slap, or check swing.
    2. When forced out of the box by a pitch.
    3. When the batter attempts a "drag bunt."

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4. When the catcher does not catch the pitched ball.
  5. When a play has been attempted.
  6. When time has been called.
  7. When the pitcher leaves the dirt area of the pitching mound or takes a position more than five feet from the pitcher's plate after receiving the ball or the catcher leaves the catcher's box.
  8. On a three ball count pitch that is a strike that the batter thinks is a ball.

**PENALTY:** If the batter leaves the batter's box or delays play and none of the exceptions apply, the umpire shall warn the batter. After one warning on a batter, the umpire shall call a strike. Any number of strikes can be called on each batter. No pitch has to be thrown, the ball is dead, and no runners may advance.

**NOTE:** The batter may return their position in the batter's box and assume the new count at any time during the at-bat, unless such enforced penalty is the third strike.

41. A courtesy runner will be allowed for the catcher, regardless of the number of outs. If all players are batting, then the last out is the courtesy runner. This rule is to help expedite the start of the next half inning and warm up the pitcher.

## **DEFENSE**

42. No player will sit out 2 consecutive innings.
43. All players must play at least 1 inning of defense in the infield each game.
44. \*The infield is defined as the following positions:
  - a. Pitcher
  - b. First base
  - c. Second base
  - d. Third base
  - e. Shortstop
  - f. Catcher
45. \*Nine players are required to field each inning.
  - a. **Minors only:** Games played against Eastview Little League will play with 4 outfielders.
46. "In-field fly rule"

The infield fly rule is called when there is a fair fly ball in the infield that appears to be catchable with ordinary effort, when 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> base, or 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> bases are occupied before two are out.

The batter is out, whether or not the ball is caught. Runners may advance at their own risk; they must "tag-up" if the ball is caught, or may advance if the ball is not caught.

If the ball bounces fair but then bounces into foul territory before being touched, it is treated like any foul.
47. Dead ball rule applies when one of the following occurs:
  - a. Ball is thrown out of play i.e., in dugout or over the fence.
  - b. If a pitched ball touches the batter's body or clothing while standing in the batter's box.
  - c. If a foul ball is not caught.
  - d. A ball touches a runner in fair territory.

## **PITCHING**

48. See the current year Little League Baseball Official Regulations and Playing Rules book (Green Book) and Appendix A of these Ground Rules for additional information concerning pitch count.
49. To avoid batter distractions by the pitcher no white gloves or extended/long sleeve shirts of any type are allowed.

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50. Wristbands of any color are not allowed while pitching.
  51. The strike zone is the space over home plate between the batter's armpits and the top of the knees when the batter assumes a natural stance.
  52. A manager or coach may come out twice in one inning to visit with the pitcher, but the second 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.
  53. A manager or coach may come out two times in one game 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 twice in the first three innings, then makes a pitching change in the fourth inning, Pitcher B would be allowed two visits in that game before being removed on the third visit, subject to the limits in #52 above.
  54. If a Manager puts in a catcher that was a pitcher earlier in the game that had exceeded the pitch limit of 41 or more pitches, it will be considered a pitching violation (pitch-catch violation) and the penalty of the Manager being suspended for one game will be enforced. If the catcher is removed before a legal pitch is thrown, there is no penalty.
  55. If a manager puts in a pitcher that was a catcher earlier in the game who caught in more than 3 innings, it will be considered a pitching violation (catch-pitch violation) and the penalty of the Manager being suspended for one game will be enforced.
  56. 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; or (3) the third out is made to complete the half-inning or the game.
  57. \*The District Administrator will review all violations. All pitch-catch or catch-pitch, days of rest, and daily pitch limit violations will result in a suspension of the manager for 1 game.
  58. A pitcher shall warm-up during the game in the bullpen in the foul area. The catcher warming up the pitcher shall wear a mask. A "spotter" wearing a helmet and glove shall be provided between the pitcher warming up and the live ball in the field of play.

#### SCOREKEEPERS

59. A Manager or the designee from a team can approach the Official Scorekeeper to inquire about pitch count ONLY after asking permission of the home plate umpire and ONLY between innings.
60. Managers are required to inform Head Scorekeeper of both pitcher and catcher changes, and any changes to the lineup during the game (e.g., if players come late or leave early)..

#### **UMPIRING**

61. Umpires will be provided by the "home" team.
62. In the unlikely event that an umpire does not arrive by Game Time, Managers should make alternate arrangements and begin the Game as close to the scheduled start time, as possible.

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## **GAME DAY CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Field Set-Up and Clean-Up**

- 1) The managers of **BOTH TEAMS** are responsible for setting up (prior to each game) and cleaning up (after each game), the field, dugouts and bleachers. The home team Manager will be responsible for the set up of the field and the visiting team Manager will be responsible for the clean up of the field.
- 2) To **Set Up** the field (please do the following):
  - a) Drag the infield, base lines and home plate area, **taking special care not to get dirt on the grass** (use drags not rakes).
  - b) Rake the mound.
  - c) Place the bases.
  - d) Lightly water the dirt areas.
  - e) Chalk/ paint base line lines. Use the string line for the base paths and the template for the home plate area.
- 3) To **Clean Up** the field (please do the following):
  - a) Drag the infield, base lines and home plate area.
  - b) Rake the mound.
  - c) Lightly water the dirt areas if a game follows yours.
  - d) If no game is scheduled after yours:
    - i) Put away the bases and equipment into the storage shed and lock the shed.
    - ii) Heavily water the dirt and grass areas.
- 4) **Dugouts and Bleachers** - Each Manager is responsible for their dugout/bleacher (please do the following):
  - a) Remove the trash from the fields, dugouts and stands. The stands should be swept as a courtesy to the fans of the following game.
  - b) Clean up should begin immediately after the game ends.

**Please Note:** These fields are our responsibility so take sometime before and after each game to ensure that these rules are followed. In the event that you must leave immediately following the game, ensure that you designate a coach or parent to take care of ALL field responsibilities or make arrangements with the other manager before arrival to switch responsibilities.

**IT IS NOT IMPORTANT WHO DOES IT. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT IT GETS DONE!**

### **Field Use Prior to the Game**

- 1) The home and visiting team will each be allowed 10 minutes to conduct an infield and/or outfield warm up of their players, if time permits.
- 2) The home team will have 1<sup>st</sup> priority for the use of the field, but consideration of time shall be allotted to the visiting team to also have 10 minutes of field time.
- 3) Example: Schedule game time is 1pm. Home team gets the field from 12:35pm to 12:45pm. Visiting team gets practice facility from 12:45pm to 12:55pm.
- 4) **Note:** Each manager should be respectful of the other team and work together on ensuring each team has enough time to properly warm up. In addition, games shall start on time and a Manager meeting with the umpire must be conducted 5 minutes prior to scheduled start time. Any issues should be directed to your Division Commissioner.

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## APPENDIX A – Pitcher and Bat Requirements

### PITCHERS

- (a) Any player on a regular season team may pitch. **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.*
- (b) A **pitcher once removed** from the mound **cannot** return as a pitcher.
- (i) 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 year old	<b>85</b> pitches per day
9-10 year old	<b>75</b> pitches per day
7-8 year old	<b>50</b> pitches per day

**Exception:** If a pitcher reaches the limit imposed in Regulation VI (c) for his/her league age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs:

- 1) That batter reaches base;
- 2) That batter is put out;
- 3) The third out is made to complete the half-inning.

**Note: 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.**

(d) Pitchers league age 14 and under must adhere to the following rest requirements:

If a player pitches **66 or more pitches in a day**, four (4) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches **51 - 65 pitches in a day**, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches **36 - 50 pitches in a day**, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches **21 - 35 pitches in a day**, one (1) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches **1 - 20 pitches in a day**, no (0) calendar day of rest is required.

*NOTE: Under no circumstances shall a player pitch in three (3) consecutive days or pitch in more than one game in a day:*

### NOTES:

The withdrawal of an ineligible pitcher after that pitcher is announced, or after a warm-up pitch is delivered, but before that player has pitched a ball to a batter, shall not be considered a violation. Little League officials are urged to take precautions to prevent protests. When a protest situation is imminent, the potential offender should be notified immediately.

Pitches delivered in games declared “Regulation Tie Games” or “Suspended Games” shall be charged against pitcher’s eligibility.

In suspended games resumed on another day, the pitchers of record at the time the game was halted may continue to pitch to the extent of their eligibility for that day, provided said pitcher has observed the required days of rest.

**Example 1:** A league age 12 pitcher delivers 70 pitches in a game on Monday when the game is suspended. The game resumes on the following Thursday. The pitcher is not eligible to pitch in the resumption of the game because he/she has not observed the required days of rest.

**Example 2:** A league age 12 pitcher delivers 70 pitches in a game on Monday when the game is suspended. The game resumes on Saturday. The pitcher is eligible to pitch up to 85 more pitches in the resumption of the game because he/she has observed the required days of rest.

**Example 3:** A league age 12 pitcher delivers 70 pitches in a game on Monday when the game is suspended. The game resumes two weeks later. The pitcher is eligible to pitch up to 85 more pitches in the resumption of the game, provided he/she is eligible based on his/her pitching record during the previous three days (or four days, if the league is using Option 2).

Note: The use of this regulation negates the concept of the “calendar week” with regard to pitching

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eligibility.

**BAT REQUIREMENTS - RULE 1.10**

1.10 - The bat must be a baseball bat which meets the USA Baseball Bat standard (USABat) as adopted by Little League. It shall be a smooth, rounded stick, and made of wood or of material and color tested and proved acceptable to the USA Baseball Bat standard (USABat). It shall not be more than 33 inches in length; nor more than  $2\frac{5}{8}$  inches in diameter, and if wood, not less than fifteen-sixteenths ( $\frac{15}{16}$ ) inches in diameter ( $\frac{7}{8}$  inch for bats less than 30") at its smallest part. Wood bats taped or fitted with a sleeve may not exceed sixteen (16) inches from the small end.

**NOTE 1:** Solid one-piece wood barrel bats do not require a USA Baseball logo.

**NOTE 2:** The traditional batting donut is not permissible

**NOTE 3:** Non-wood bats may develop dents from time to time. Bats that have cracks or sharp edges, or that cannot pass through the approved Little League bat ring for the appropriate division must be removed from play. The  $2\frac{1}{4}$ -inch bat ring must be used for bats labeled  $2\frac{1}{4}$ . The  $2\frac{5}{8}$ -inch bat ring must be used for bats labeled for  $2\frac{5}{8}$ .

**NOTE 4:** An illegal bat must be removed. Any bat that has been altered shall be removed from play.

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## APPENDIX B - Code of Conduct

### Code of Conduct

All persons participating in Interleague games must abide by the Code of Conduct, which includes the provisions below:

- No one shall use tobacco products, alcohol or drugs at any Little League facility, including not only the stands and the field but also all adjacent areas to the field such as the parking lot and restroom.
- No one shall provoke a manager, coach, player, umpire or spectator.
- No one shall use profane or abusive language.
- No one shall show repetitive or violent disapproval of an umpire's decision such as, but not limited to, whether a batted ball is fair or foul, whether a pitch is a strike or a ball, or whether a runner is safe or out.
- All decisions of the umpires or other game officials shall be accepted as being fair and called to the best of their abilities.
- The "Code of Conduct" shall also pertain to the use of online systems and resources.
- Any violation of the above will be reviewed by the District Administrator for appropriate action.
- Notwithstanding the preceding items, no participant whether manager, coach, player, fan, guest, visitor or bystander, shall physically contact any umpire, manager, coach, player or spectator. Violation of this rule will result in the manager, coach, player, fan, guest, visitor or bystander being immediately removed from the facilities **and** being subject to possible disqualification by the District Administrator from future participation and/or attendance at any interleague games.