

# Game Day Rules: A Division



This is a supplemental policy to both the By-Laws of Santa Teresa Little League and the official rules provided by Little League International.

The A division is an instructional level of Santa Teresa Little League. Its intent is not to cultivate a competitive atmosphere but to improve player's skill level and to prepare the children for the more competitive Minor and Major division of play. The development of players' skill should be a primary focus in the division. Counting total runs and winning the game will not be the focus. It is the manager's responsibility to teach the fundamentals of the game, develop players and to provide a positive experience that will encourage the child to continue playing Little League.

## 1. Coach Pitch:

This is a coach pitch division. **The Little League rulebook states that players age 6 are not allowed to participate in a player pitch division.**

### First 6 GAMES

- a. Batter receives a maximum of **5** pitches from the coach/manager who is standing or kneeling 15' – 18' from the plate (15' for lesser batters; up to 18' if they consistently make contact).
- b. Pitches should be flat and hittable.
- c. There are no "called" balls or strikes.
- d. Batters do not walk, but they cannot receive more than 5 pitches.
- e. If the batter has not batted the ball into fair territory after 5 pitches, that is considered a strikeout.
- f. If on the 5th pitch the batter hits a 'foul ball' they will be provided another pitch. If during any subsequent pitches the batter hits a 'foul ball' they will continue to receive pitches until either: (A) the ball is batted in fair territory where the result of the play dictates the outcome (safe or out), (B) the batter swings and misses for a swinging strikeout, or (c) the batter does not swing which is considered a strikeout.

### Remainder of the season

- a. Batter receives a maximum of **6** pitches from the coach/manager who is standing no closer than 20' (attempt to challenge accomplished batters).
- b. Pitches should be flat and hittable.
- c. There are no "called" balls or strikes, however swinging strikes are called. Three swinging strikes results in an out.
- d. Batters do not walk, but they can strikeout.
- e. If the batter has not batted the ball into fair territory after 5 pitches, and they do not swing at the 6th pitch, that is considered a strikeout.
- f. If on the 6th pitch the batter hits a 'foul ball' they are provided another pitch. If during any subsequent pitches the batter hits a 'foul ball' they continue to receive pitches until either: (A) the ball is batted in fair territory where the result of the play dictates the outcome (safe or out), (B) the batter swings and misses for a swinging strikeout, or (c) the batter does not swing which is considered a strikeout.

## 2. Ending Play:

- a. The play is considered “dead” when the player pitcher or manager/coach pitcher has the ball on the infield.
- b. Runners will advance to the next base if they are more than 50% of the way to the next base.
- c. Runners will return to the prior base if they are less than 50% of the way to the next base.

## 3. Batting:

- a. Use continuous batting order.
- b. The lead-off batter should be rotated for each game, giving all players a similar amount of at bats throughout the season.
- c. Batting will continue until there are 3 **defensive outs** (including strikeouts, or 4 runs have been scored. Managers need to advise defensive team when the 4th run has scored.
- d. After 4 runs have scored, the teams switch sides (from offense to defense, and defense to offense.)

## 4. Base Running:

- a. Players should be encouraged to run the bases on balls in play.
- b. When balls are hit to the outfield, the base coaches will have the discretion to send the players to second or third. It is encouraged to limit base running advances to teach the fundamentals of the game.
- c. No infield fly rule.
- d. Feet first sliding is permitted. Head First sliding **is not** permitted.
- e. Managers must teach rules of obstruction and interference. Obstruction/Interference will not be called but will be taught.

## 6. Catching

- a. All Single A teams will field a player at the Catching position when on defense during games
- b. When playing the catcher position all players must wear a protective cup/jock supporter and have the adequate catching equipment as stated by Little League International rule book (shin guards, chest protector w/dangle, catcher’s mask/helmet w/throat protector)
- c. During games while in the catching position and being fed pitches, players are to be instructed to give their best effort/attempt to catch/block the pitch. However if the pitch is not caught they are to leave the ball where it lies (unless it is in the batters area in which case they can move it out of the way).
- d. Catchers are to be instructed not to throw the caught pitch back to the coach. They are to roll the ball behind them to the backstop so as to prevent slow play from occurring.
- e. *Stretch Goal:* 7 year olds/capable players: begin to work in turning around to get the ball and throw back.

## 5. Passed Balls / Overthrows:

- a. There is no stealing in the Single A division. Runners cannot advance on passed balls pitched to the catcher.
- b. Any overthrown ball, either in the field of play, foul territory or out of bounds, the runner(s) are allowed to advance a **maximum** of one (1) base. Managers/Coaches should use discretion emphasizing advancing on overthrows for **exaggerated or egregious errors only**.

## 6. Coaching on the Field:

- a. Managers and coaches are encouraged to be out in the field teaching and instructing the players on the proper technique and correct baseball play.
  - Defense: Recommended that there are two coaches roaming between the outfield and infield; in between plays teaching the players what to expect next (which base is an out, for example).
  - Offense: Coach pitcher and one behind catcher to assist with batter positioning.
- b. There must be at least (1) coach (or approved volunteer) in the dugout when there are any players in the dugout.

c. *Stretch Goal*: Aim to have no coaches or only one roaming outfield coach during the final two games.

#### **7. Defense:**

- a. Teams may field 4 outfielders.
- b. No “buck” short stops or additional infielders.
- c. Managers are required to rotate their players to various positions. Throughout the regular season, every player must play a minimum of 1 defensive inning at every position.
- d. The managers will track the positions played by every player on the team. Every player must play at least (1) inning in the infield, although it is strongly encouraged they play more. The rotation of the players will be kept inside the managers playing binders and presented to the Division Director or any Executive Board Member if asked.
- e. Parents may request that their child not play a certain position.
- f. Outfielders should be at least 10 feet out from the grass infield edge when the batter swings.
- g. The player pitcher must be standing in the approximate position of a pitcher. -
- h. Only Players and Coaches will be allowed in the dugout.
- i. There are no on deck batters and warming up batters behind the dugout is not permitted.

#### **8. Bunting:**

- a. No bunting allowed.

#### **9. Game Time Limit:**

- a. Games should not exceed 90 minutes.
- b. New innings should not start after 75 minutes have elapsed from the start of play.

#### **10. Thrown Bats:**

- a. 1st time, a child will be warned but be allowed to carry out the result of the play.
- b. 2nd time, the child may be called out if the thrown bat endangered another player or coach. The manager will explain to them the dangers of throwing the bat.
- c. Every other subsequent At Bat where the batter has thrown the bat they will be susceptible to being immediately called out.
- f. Only the batter may have a bat in their hand. All other bats should be idle.

#### **11. Parents:**

- a. Managers need to communicate to the parents that the goal of A ball is to teach and expose the kids the game of baseball. Winning is not emphasized at this level; just competing to their best.

#### **12. Umpiring the Game:**

- a. Managers and coaches will be in charge of all umpiring duties.
- b. 1st and 3rd base coaches for the offensive team will make **safe/out calls at their respective bases. The coach pitching to his/her team makes safe/out calls at second/home. Base coaches determine when the runner is more than 50% between bases.**

**This policy has been adopted by the STLL Board of Directors: 02/2018**