

Game Day Rules:

AA Division



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

The AA division is an instructional level of Santa Teresa Little League. Its intent is to cultivate an atmosphere that places an emphasis on improving player's skill level and to prepare the children for the higher level Minors division of play. The development of players' skill should be a primary focus in the division. 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. Field Preparation

a. Field Setup

- i. Both teams are to complete preparation of the field for play (at least 30 minutes prior the scheduled start of the game.)
 1. Setting up the trash cans from the snack shack or shed
 2. Remove any rain tarps, fold them, and move to safe location outside of the field of play area
 3. Dragging the infield dirt and raking pitcher's mound, batter's box and catchers area
 4. Removal of base plugs and inserting bases
 5. Watering the infield dirt
 6. Chalking the foul lines, batter's box and base coach boxes
 7. Filling in holes around home plate, the pitching mound, bullpen and any other location that is uneven
 8. If there is a portable outfield fence available, both the home and visiting teams have the responsibility to put it up

b. Field Takedown

- i. Both teams are to complete takedown of the field for play (immediately following the completion of the game)
 1. Drag infield dirt, rake the mound, base paths and home plate.
 2. Each team is responsible for cleaning out their dugout after every game. No food (especially sunflower seeds or gum) is allowed in the dugout or on the field.
 3. If there is a game immediately following yours, pick up all your gear and leave the field if you want to have a quick talk with your kids about the game. If your team provides after game snacks please give them to the kids off the field regardless.
 4. At the conclusion of the final game of the day:
 - a. Remove bases and stack neatly in the shed, insert baseplugs
 - b. If there is a portable outfield fence available, both the home and visiting teams have the responsibility to put it take it down and store in the shed.
 - c. Place rain tarps on the Pitcher's mound and Home Plate area

- d. Last home team of the day is responsible for taking all trash to the dumpster, replacing the trash bag liners
- e. Gates to fields and sheds are to be locked after all games

2. Pre-Game

- a. **Snack Shack:** Each home team is required to provide parents to work in the snack shack. In the event that the team does not provide a parent, the manager will be notified and asked to cover that requirement.
 - i. Bernal: (1) parent from every home team. (A ball/ AA ball/ and AAA)
 - ii. Frost: (1) from every home team. (Tee ball or A ball/ AA ball/ and AAA)
 - iii. Steinbeck: we do not need to supply volunteers.
- b. **Scorekeeping & Scoreboard Operator:** Keeping a scorebook or scoreboard is *not* required in AA
 - i. Managers will monitor the score of the game in order to identify when the Maximum Inning run and Total Game run rule limits have been met.
- c. **Infield/Outfield:** The away team gets infield practice for the first 10 minutes of warm-ups and the home team gets the last 10 minutes.
 - i. The home team may forfeit its infield practice if field preparation is not completed on time.
 - ii. No soft toss into any fence. Bring a net or safely hit into open field if possible instead.
- d. **Manager/Coach Meeting:** There should be a plate meeting between opposing managers before each game. The plate meeting will typically be a brief meeting at home plate right before the game starts to ensure both teams are aware of and in agreement of the game day rules. During this meeting the managers will share pitching affidavits with each other as to make aware if any player pitcher is ineligible.

3. Safety

- a. **Equipment:**
 - i. Catchers Helmets: Catchers must wear an approved protective mask with “dangling” throat guard at all times (E.g. warming up a pitcher on the field or in the “bull pen”, during pre-game infield/outfield warm-up, or while catching for a manager/coach during infield/outfield practice.)
 - ii. Cup: All male players should wear an approved athletic cup and supporter during all games. Catchers must wear a hard cup. If, in the umpire’s judgment a player is not properly equipped, that player shall be removed from the current game and the issue must be addressed by the manager so it does not occur in future games.
- b. **Jewelry:** No wearing of jewelry is allowed - (j) Players must not wear jewelry such as, but not limited to, rings, watches, earrings, bracelets, necklaces, nor any hard cosmetic/decorative items. This rule applies regardless of the composition of such jewelry, hard cosmetic item, or hard decorative item. (EXCEPTION: Jewelry that alerts medical personnel to a specific condition is permissible.)”
- c. **Dugouts:** If your field has a dugout gate then keep it closed or safely clear of players during play when not giving signs to your catcher. If the umpire sees players in the door/gate area during play they will warn the manager to keep that area clear or the gate will be kept shut. There should not be any talking with any spectator by the manager, coach or player during the game. No electronic communications devices are allowed in the dugout except to score the game.
- d. **Base Coaches:** 1st and 3rd base coaches should be outside the dugout while the game is being played. (their team is batting) One coach must be in the dugout at all times with the players. Only 2 coaches and a manager are allowed on the field and in the dugout. No additional persons may be on the field or in the dugout area.

- e. **Food:** There is no food allowed on the field or in the dugouts (especially sunflower seeds or gum). Water and Gatorade drinks are allowed
- f. **Warm Ups:** Coaches do **not** catch for players when warming up pitchers anywhere. If your catcher is not ready then have another player put on a helmet and let them warm your pitcher up.

4. Playing Time

- a. **MANDATORY MINIMUM PLAYING TIME (MPT):** All players in the AA division must play a minimum of three (3) innings in a 5 inning game, and four (4) innings in a six inning game. Players will not sit on the bench in consecutive innings.
- b. Each player must play infield at least one inning per game. Managers are encouraged to rotate players defensively (giving players chances to play infield as much as possible). Parents may request that their child not play a certain position for their safety.
- c. No pitcher may re-enter the game as a pitcher.
- d. Managers who fail to comply with playing time rules may be subject to discipline by the league's Board of Directors.

5. Defense

- a. Teams will field 4 outfielders. (unless there are less than 10 players in attendance, at which time 3 outfielders will be permitted)
- b. No "buck" short stops or additional infielders.
- c. Outfielders should be at least 20 feet out from the grass infield edge when the batter swings. The intent is to teach the players outfield and infield.
- d. When the coach pitcher is brought out after a Ball-4, the player pitcher must be standing in the approximate position of a pitcher. (standing w/1 foot on the pitching mound)
- e. **Coaching on the Field**
 - 1. One Coach is allowed to be in the outfield when their team is on defense. One coach will be behind the pitcher calling balls/strikes. There should be no other coaches on the field, including behind home plate.
 - 2. There must be at least (1) coach in the dugout if there are any players in the dugout.
 - 3. Only Players, Team Parent and Coaches will be allowed in the dugout.

6. Pitching: The AA division is primarily a player pitch division. (supplemented w/Coach Pitch)

- a. **Player Pitch:** Player pitchers will pitch until they have either thrown (3) strikes for an out, or (4) pitches that are called balls, or the batter has put the ball into play.
- b. **Coach Pitch:** If the player pitcher has thrown (4) pitches that are called balls, then a COACH for the hitting team will enter the game and deliver up to (3) balls to the batter. The batter's count, from when the player pitched, will carry over when the coach pitcher comes into the game. The batter must put one of 3 pitched balls from the coach into play or it will be considered an out.
 - i. The coach must be in a standing posture, within two feet of the pitching rubber, and attempt to throw an overhand, flat, hittable pitch.
 - ii. If the batter fouls a pitch on any 3rd strike he continues until he strikes out or puts the ball in play.
 - iii. If the batter has not batted the ball into fair territory after 2 Coach pitches, and they do not swing at the 3rd pitch, that will be considered a strikeout.
 - iv. There are no walks in the game but there are strikeouts.
- c. **PITCH COUNTS FOR AA DIVISION**
 - i. Pitchers ages 7-9 may throw a maximum of 50 pitches per game.
 - ii. Little League pitching rules of rest apply to the AA division and are as follows:
 - 1. * If a player pitches 36-50 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest are required
 - 2. * If a player pitches 21-35 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar days of rest are required
 - 3. * If a player pitches 1-20 pitches in a day, no (0) calendar day of rest is required

- d. **Tracking Pitch Count Responsibility:** It's the manager's job to keep track of the pitch count and lineup as well as the other team's pitch count and lineup. It is not anyone else's responsibility to let a manager know if a player has reached a pitch count threshold, or is batting out of turn. The manager will need to bring it up. However, if you do lose track or think your pitch count is off, ask the official pitch counter what the count is from the dugout. "Can I get my player's (#) pitch count?" There is no need to stop play.
- i. Each team needs to track and update their pitching affidavit for every game. All copies should be kept in your team binder. This binder must be kept up to date and presented to the Division Director or any Executive Board Member if asked.
 - ii. The official pitch counter and opposing manager needs to initial both team's pitching affidavits at the end of the game.
 - iii. Pitching affidavits should be done in ink so they cannot be altered easily.
<https://stlitleague.org/manager/pitch-counts>
- e. **Pitch Count Threshold & Changing a Pitcher:**
- i. As a courtesy to the pitch counter and opposing manager, before substituting a pitcher, you can tell the other team, "last batter" from the dugout so the pitch counter can check if a pitcher reaches a day(s) of rest threshold while facing a batter. The pitcher may continue to pitch 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.
 - ii. The true number of pitches thrown is the actual number if between thresholds, OR if a threshold was crossed during a 'last batter', then the number reverts back to the threshold
 - iii. For example, a pitcher has thrown 33 pitches. A new batter comes to the plate. His first pitch thrown is pitch #34. The manager indicates "last batter" to the umpire and scorekeeper. The pitcher goes on to have 5 more pitches before the batter is retired. If the manager removes him from the game, his pitch count would be #35 because that is the threshold which was crossed on his last batter.
 - iv. The pitcher will only be required to observe the calendar day(s) of rest for the threshold he/she reached during that at-bat, provided that pitcher is removed or the game is completed before delivering a pitch to another batter. Important - You should also make this clear to your parent pitch counters before the game.
- f. **Attire:** Pitchers may not wear a long-sleeved white undershirt. Pitchers also may not wear batting glove(s), wristbands or sweatbands, and shall not have batting gloves in their pocket. Anything that might distract the batter basically is not allowed.

7. **Batting**

- a. **Continuous Batting Order:** All players will bat consecutively through the order even if they are not playing in the field
- b. The lead-off batter should be rotated for each game, giving all players a similar amount of at bats throughout the season.
- c. **Hit By Pitch:** A player hit by a *player* pitch automatically takes first base. No exceptions. (Courtesy runners allowed if player hurt).
 - i. A player hit by a coach pitch will be considered a Ball, and the batter will continue his/her At Bat (EXCEPTION: if the 3rd pitch by the coach hits the batter it WILL be considered a strikeout)
 - ii. If a batter is hit by a pitch encourage the pitcher and the batter to shake hands before continuing play.
- d. **Dropped 3rd Strike:** Batter is out on "not caught" third strike.
- e. **On Deck:** There will be no on-deck batters in or outside the playing field.

- f. **Bunting:** Bunting is not allowed, however, it should be taught in practices to prepare players for the AAA Division.
- g. **3 RUN RULE/10 RUN MERCY RULE:** There is a 3-run per inning limit in effect all season including the end of season tournament. Batting will continue until there are 3 defensive outs (including strikeouts, or 3 runs have been scored. Managers need to advise defensive team when the 3rd-run has scored.
 - i. During the half inning if a team scores 3 runs then the two teams will swap sides (offense to defense, defense to offense). If the 3rd run is scored while the play is taking place you can let the play conclude but only the 3 runs will count. However, if a homerun is hit by a batter all runs will count including any runners on base. This must be an “over the fence” home run.
 - ii. If it is discovered that 3 runs have been scored after a new batter has begun his plate appearance, the play is stopped and the batter leads off the following inning.
 - iii. If there is a 10 run differential after the 4th inning the game will be stopped after the 4th inning. If the home team is winning after the top of the 4th then the Home team will not bat and the game will be considered over.
- h. **Thrown Bats:** 1st time, a child will be warned but be allowed to carry out the result of the play. 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. Every other subsequent At Bat where the batter has thrown the bat they will be susceptible to being immediately called out.
 - i. Only the batter may have a bat in their hand. All other bats should be idle.

8. Base Running

- a. Players should be encouraged to run the bases on balls in play. When balls are hit to the outfield, the base coaches will have the discretion -to-send the kids to advance to the next base(s). It is encouraged to limit baserunning advances to teach the fundamentals of the game.
- b. There is no stealing
- c. Runners will not advance bases on passed balls pitched to the catcher.
- d. No infield fly rule.
- e. Feet first sliding is permitted when advancing to the next base. Head First sliding is **only permitted when diving back to a base.**
- f. Managers must teach rules of obstruction and interference. Obstruction/Interference will not be called but will be taught.
- g. Any overthrow **out of bounds**, the base runners will advance (1) base. Any overthrown ball, either in the field of play or foul territory, the runner(s) will be allowed to advance only one (1) base at his/her own risk. Managers/Coaches should use discretion emphasizing advancing on overthrows for exaggerated or egregious errors only.
- h. Managers must teach rules of obstruction and interference. A warning for Obstruction/Interference will be given during the 1st half of the season. During the 2nd half of the season and in tournament plate Obstruction/Interference may be called an enforced by the umpire

9. Starting and Ending a Play

- a. The play is considered “dead” when the pitcher has the ball and both feet are on the infield grass or pitching mound.
- b. The pitcher must have at least one foot on the pitcher’s rubber to start play.
- c. Runners will advance to the next base if they are more than 50% of the way to the next base, when the pitcher is in possession of the ball while on the infield
- d. Runners will return to the prior base if they are less than 50% of the way to the next base, when the pitcher is in possession of the ball while on the infield.

10. Game Duration: 90 minutes (M-F), 2 hours (Sat), or 6 innings

- a. Games will not exceed 90 minutes Monday-Friday. Saturday games will not exceed 2 hours. New innings should not start after 75 minutes have elapsed from the start of play Monday

- through Friday. (Exception: Games during tournament play will follow tournament play rules)
- b. Game clock start time needs to be agreed upon by both team managers
 - c. New inning is defined to begin at the moment the 3rd out is made in the bottom of the inning
 - d. If the Home team is leading after the Visiting team has batted, and the time limit is reached, the Home team will not bat and the umpire shall end the game

11. Temporary Replacement Players

- a. If a team is unable to place 9 players on defense it is allowable to borrow players from the opposing team in order to have 9 players on the field. However, this will not be allowed in postseason play. The opposing manager will choose the players that are borrowed by the team with less than nine. The borrowed players can only play in the outfield and will bat last in the batting order. Mandatory playing time must still be followed. If neither team can field nine players managers should make every effort to play the game then have both teams provide outfielders for each other and rotate out as the replacement player gets up to bat for their respective team.

12. Umpires

- a. Managers and coaches will be in charge of all umpiring duties.
- b. The batting team's 1st and 3rd base coaches will make safe/out calls at their respective bases.
- c. Base coaches will determine when the runner is more/less than 50% between bases.
- d. The defensive team will have a Coach, standing behind the pitcher's mound calling balls and strikes, and will make safe/out calls at second base and home plate.

13. **Post Season:** The Minor (AA) division will have a tournament at the end of the season. The tournament schedule/format will be decided by the player agent, vice president, and division director, based on the number of teams.

14. Behavior and Sportsmanship

- a. **Conduct:** The manager is responsible for the conduct of your team's players, coaches and parents. No artificial or homemade noisemakers are allowed at any time. Make sure that you talk to them before the game to cover what we do and don't cheer for as well as how their personal conduct reflects on themselves, the team and the league.
 - i. Managers need to communicate to the parents that the goal of AA ball is not to win at all costs. This is instructional baseball and both teams should be supported during the game. Coaches need to encourage the parents to refrain from all negative commentary, cursing and/or arguing with umpires
 - ii. <https://stlitleague.org/info/code-of-conduct>
- b. **Post-Game Handshake:** It shall be mandatory for all players, managers and coaches at the completion of their game to participate in a post-game cheer and handshake ceremony on the field of play. In addition, all players must thank the umpiring crew and any other game officials present.

This policy has been adopted by the STLL Board of Directors: XX/2017