

Game Day Rules: AAA 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 AAA 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 more competitive Major 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
 9. If there is a portable scoreboard then the scoreboard is required to be setup and powered on

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. If there is a portable scoreboard then the scoreboard is required to be powered off, taken down, and securely placed in the shed
- f. 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. Anderson: (1) from every home team. (Tee Ball/Major or AAA)
 - iv. Steinbeck: we do not need to supply volunteers.
- b. **Scorekeeping & Scoreboard Operator:** The home team shall provide an "official" scorekeeper and will use the GameChanger app to keep the official scorebook.
 - i. Score can be kept on personal or league provided electronic devices to ensure that players are meeting their minimum play requirements.
 - ii. Procedures will be followed and are found in the STLL GameChanger manual.
 - iii. The scorekeeper is also responsible for keeping track of the pitch counts.
 - iv. Typically, it's a good idea to have one parent track pitch count and run the scoreboard while the other parent runs the scorebook.
- 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. **Umpire Plate Meeting:** There should be a plate meeting before each game. The plate umpire will typically conduct a brief meeting at home plate right before the game starts. The plate umpire, base umpire, both managers and at least one player from each team should attend.

Umpires use the acronym **LEGS**.

L- Lineup cards. Lineup cards need to be on league-distributed cards. The line up cards should be completely filled out with all players on the team. If a player is absent, he should be listed as so. The line up cards should not be separated but handed to the umpire with all 4 copies intact. The home team goes first and hands the lineup to the umpire who separates the copies. Top copy stays with umpire, next copy goes to opposing manager, next copy goes to scorekeeper and the last copy goes back to the manager. Ineligible pitchers should be noted.

E - Equipment. A simple question to each manager. Are your players properly equipped? Are your bats legal? No jewelry

G - Ground rules. Any rules specific to the field should be noted.

S - Sportsmanship. A simple statement regarding sportsmanship and how to ask an umpire a question or to call for time...

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. If you are short a base coach a player can base coach as long as they wear a helmet.
- 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 AAA 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. Managers are encouraged to rotate players defensively (giving players chances to play infield). Managers who fail to comply with playing time rules may be subject to discipline by the league’s Board of Directors.

5. Pitching

Pitch Counts	
Maximum Pitches	
League Age	Pitcher per Day
17-18	105
13-16	95
11&12	85
9&10	75
7&8	50
Required Rest (14 and under)	
Number or Pitches thrown	Rest Days required
>65	4
51-65	3

36-50	2
21-35	1
<20	0
<p>➤ Rest Days is the number of days between games, so a team that plays Wednesday then Saturday would have 2 days rest and any pitcher who pitched more than 50 pitches would be ineligible to pitch on Saturday.</p> <p>➤ The Number of pitches thrown is kept by the official score keeper/pitch counter in AAA and above. The score keeper/pitch counter is the responsibility of the home team.</p>	

- a. **Tracking Pitch Count Responsibility:** It's the managers job to keep track of the pitch count and lineup as well as the other team's pitch count and lineup. It is not the umpire's or scorekeeper'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 scorekeeper 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.
 - ii. The official scorekeeper 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>
- b. **Pitch Count Threshold & Changing a Pitcher:**
- i. As a courtesy to the pitch counter and scorekeeper, before substituting a pitcher, you can tell the scorekeeper and umpire, "last batter" from the dugout so the scorekeeper 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 48 pitches. A new batter comes to the plate. His first pitch thrown is pitch #49. 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 #50 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-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 scorekeepers before the game.
- c. **Pitchers that play Catcher/Catchers that play Pitcher:** A player who has pitched 41 or more pitches may not play as catcher for the rest of the day. A player who has played as the catcher in four or more innings may not pitch for the rest of the day. Receipt of a single pitch as catcher in an inning constitutes catching in that inning.
- d. **Illegal Pitch:** There are no balks in AAA only illegal pitches. If an illegal pitch is called, the penalty will result in a ball to "the count."

- e. **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.

6. Batting

- a. **Continuous Batting Order:** All players will bat consecutively through the order presented to the umpires and opposing team on the lineup card at the start of the game.
- b. **Hit By Pitch:** If a batter is hit by a pitch encourage the pitcher and the batter to shake hands before continuing play.
- c. **Dropped 3rd Strike:** Batter is out on “not caught” third strike.
- d. **On Deck:** There will be no on-deck batters in or outside the playing field.
- e. **5 RUN RULE/10 RUN MERCY RULE:** There is a 5-run per inning limit in effect all season including the end of season tournament.
 - i. During the half inning if a team scores 5 runs then the two teams will swap sides (offense to defense, defense to offense). If the 5th run is scored while the play is taking place you can let the play conclude but only the 5 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 5 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.
- f. **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.

7. Base Running

- a. Feet first sliding is permitted when advancing to the next base. Head First sliding is **only permitted when diving back to a base.**
- b. Managers must teach rules of obstruction and interference. Obstruction/Interference may be called and enforced by the umpire
- c. Infield fly rule is in effect; umpires must make the judgement call. If they don't then there is no infield fly rule called.

8. Game Duration: 2 hours or 6 innings

- a. Game clock is based upon the umpire's time
- b. No new inning may begin after 2 hours have elapsed.
- 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 2-hour time limit is reached, the Home team will not bat and the umpire shall end the game

9. 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. All regular season games are considered exhibitions so this does not affect any “standings”.

10. **Post Season:** The Minor (AAA) 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.

11. **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.
<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.
- c. **Umpire Interactions**
 - i. Keep the game moving and resist stopping the game by calling for time if at all possible.
 - ii. If you do need to call for time, call from the dugout. ("Blue, time...?") Once time is granted, go to the umpire who made the call and respectfully ask your question. Don't go marching out onto the field until the umpire calls time.
 - iii. You need to be specific about the play and rule you are questioning.
 - iv. Don't question a judgment call
 - v. Go back to your dugout and wait for the answer if the umpires need to confer.

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