

West Side Little League
7 And 8 Year Old Division Rules
revised Spring 2007

I. Use of Players

A. Teams will use a batting order consisting of all players who show up for the game. Players who arrive after one inning is completed will be placed at the bottom of their team's batting order.

B. If a child does not want to play, the coach will encourage but not coerce the child to play. A player who leaves a game may return later.

C. Fielders shall include a short fielder who will be positioned behind second base and a pitcher's helper to field for the adult pitcher.

D. The team in the field will supply an adult to back up the catcher.

E. The team at bat will supply an adult pitcher.

F. All players in the 7's and 8's must play at least two positions each game, including at least two innings in the outfield and two innings in the infield. Infield positions include: pitcher's assistant, first base, second base, short field, shortstop, and third base. **The position of catcher only fulfills a players' infield requirement, if they play two innings as catcher and another inning in the infield...and not as catcher!..(one inning as catcher and one inning in another infield position would fulfill the requirement).

G. In the 7 year old division, all children will play in the field, either in the infield (at the positions listed above) or the outfield.

H. In the 8 year old division, the infield will consist of the positions listed above, and the outfield will be limited to five players. If more than 12 players are on a team, the other players must sit out (act as scorekeeper, for example). No player

shall sit out more than one inning per game.

I. All players will bat in the batting order.

J. Managers must exchange batting orders and fielding alignments for six innings prior to the start of the game.

K. The Division Head will investigate all charges of failure to use players in accordance with these rules upon receiving a complaint from a manager. If the charges are substantiated, the manager who has violated the rules shall be automatically suspended from the team's next game. A second infraction will result the indefinite suspension of the manager and the appointment by the Division Head of a replacement manager.

II. Batting

A. The batter must enter the batter's box promptly when instructed to by the umpire.

B. If a batter bats out of turn, he or she will be declared out upon appeal.

C. There are no balls called, and strikes are called only upon swinging. A player is allowed three swings. If the third swing is a clean miss, the batter is out. There is a ten-pitch limit for each batter, after which an out is declared. The umpire may add pitches to this limit for an individual at-bat, if the umpire believes that the batter saw too few hittable pitches to constitute a fair turn at bat. The umpire is encouraged to request a change of coach-pitchers if a pattern of unhittable pitches persists.

D. A foul tip on the third swing enables the batter to swing again, even if the adult catcher holds on to the foul tip. Only if the child catcher holds on to a foul tip on the third swing will the batter be declared out.

E. A batter may not deliberately bunt. A player who, in the judgment of the umpire, squares around for the purpose of bunting shall be given a strike.

F. No player may bat without a batting helmet. A player who refuses to wear a helmet shall miss that turn at bat.

III.Pitching

A. The distance between the mound and home plate shall be no more than 25 feet.

B. The adult pitcher may throw underhand or overhand to a batter in the 7 year old division. In the 8 year old division, the adult pitcher shall pitch overhand only.

C. If the batter hits the adult pitcher with the ball, the ball remains in play.

D. The adult pitcher must make every effort to get out of the way of any play and should only attempt to catch a ball that is thrown to him or her for the purpose of ending a play (see Rule V.I. Below)

E. The adult pitcher may not instruct fielders whether or not they should attempt a play on a ground ball near the foul line.

IV.Consultation

A. The team at bat is permitted a first and third base coach who may consult freely with base runners, but not physically assist them.

B. The team in the field is permitted a fielding coach, positioned near second base, who may instruct fielders.

V. Running

A. The distance between bases shall be 50 feet.

- B. No runner may go more than three feet out of the baseline except to avoid interfering with a fielder attempting to make a play on a batted or thrown ball.
- C. Baserunners may not take leads. A runner must keep a foot on the base until a batter makes contact with the ball, at which point he or she is permitted to run.
- D. There is no stealing.
- E. Sliding feet-first is permitted. There is no sliding head-first. A runner who slides into a base head first, or collides with another player without sliding, will be called out regardless of the result of play. "Slide or avoid" is the rule.
- F. One base is permitted, but must be earned, on all wild throws that go into foul territory.
- G. On balls hit to the outfield, a baserunner cannot advance beyond the base to which he or she is running once the ball arrives in the infield. For the purpose of this rule, runners may not advance once an infielder is in possession of the ball (in the infield). If the ball is unintentionally thrown out of bounds from the outfield, the runners are allowed one base that must be earned.
- H. When a runner stops at a base and no play is being made, either on the runner or at another base, the runner cannot proceed to the next base. If a runner does not stop, the ball cannot be considered dead until a play is made to stop the runner.
- I. On a ball hit to or fielded by an infielder, baserunners cannot advance beyond the base to which they are running once the ball is thrown to the adult pitcher or the pitcher's helper.
- J. If a runner must slow down because a fielder is blocking a base, then a call at that base will favor the runner.

VI.Movement of the Game

A. A team must have a minimum of seven players in order to have a game.

B. All games will consist of either six full innings or 95 minutes, whichever comes first, after the game begins. However, no game may end in the middle half inning. Thus, if after 95 minutes the game is in the middle of an inning, the inning must be played to completion. The score at the end of that inning will determine the final score.

C. The maximum number of runs that can be scored in a half inning if three outs have not been recorded will be either five, or enough runs to give the team at bat a two-run lead ... whichever is greater. If the maximum is reached on a play where additional runs also score, those additional runs will count. The exception to this rule is in the bottom of the final inning. If the "home" team needs to score more than five runs to catch up, the game will be declared over when a tie is achieved. If five runs or fewer are needed for the "home" team to go ahead in the final inning, those runs will be permitted. If they are scored, the "home" team will be considered the winner. **See explanation and interpretation below*

VII. Rules of Conduct

A. Unsportsmanlike conduct on the part of players, coaches, and parents is prohibited. It is up to adult participants to provide examples of good sportsmanship and fair play for players.

B. Once the teams are on the field, the umpire is in charge until the game is over. The umpire is responsible for keeping the game moving and beginning and ending on time. We expect umpires to use their best judgment and to be reasonable in this, but we also expect the cooperation of coaches, parents, and players.

C. Restrain yourself, your players, and your spectators. Umpires have authority from the league to enforce rules and to eject any coach, player, or spectator for objecting to a decision or for unsportsmanlike language or behavior. No umpire

wants to cause a "scene" by exercising this ultimate authority. Don't put an umpire's back to the wall. Coaches are appointed by the League and are responsible for their team's conduct, observance of rules, and respect for the umpire's authority.

D. Judgment calls by an umpire are not grounds for a protest. Only the interpretation of the rules may be protested. The manager must inform the umpire before the next play begins that the game is being played under protest and the umpire shall so inform the opposing coach. The protesting coach must submit a written protest to the league within 24 hours. The protest must describe the circumstances and the interpretation of the rules that the manager feels to be correct.

E. Coaches may leave their bench area only to take up take up assigned positions or to confer with a player. They must first receive the umpire's permission to consult with a player. Only the head coach may confer with umpires.

F. Check with the division umpire coordinator to make sure an umpire is assigned to your games. For each game, there should be two parent umpires, one from each team. Parents of players are encouraged to volunteer as umpires.

VIII.Safety Rules

A. Batting helmets must be worn by all batters, base runners, players in the on-deck circle, and all first or third base coaches under age 18 during practices and games. Regulation batting helmets are provided by the League. Runners must not intentionally remove their helmets while running the bases. If the umpire feels that a player did intentionally remove his or her helmet, that player shall be warned.

B. A full set of catcher's equipment must be worn by players in the catcher's position, including warm-ups. There are no exceptions. Little Leaguers serving as catchers must wear a cup. Athletic supporters with the cup insert as well as

the cup will be provided by the League along with all other catcher's equipment.

C. The throwing of bats is strictly prohibited. If the batter throws the bat, the batter will be called out for dangerous play and the ball will be dead.

D. The swinging of bats, including practice swings, is allowed only in the batter's box. To limit risk of injury to the on-deck batter, that batter will remain in the dugout (not in an on-deck circle) until it is his/her turn at bat.

E. During games and practices, all persons not directly involved in the game or practice (batter, base runners, players in the field, umpires, coaches) should remain at least three (3) feet behind an imaginary line that extends from the end of the backstop and runs parallel to the foul line.

F. Only players, coaches, and umpires are permitted on the playing field during play and practice sessions.

G. Metal spikes and cleats are prohibited.

H. Eyeglasses should be of "Safety Glass" and glasses should be secured with straps.

I. Stand-up collisions are not allowed. A fielder without the ball must get out of the runner's way. When the fielder has the ball and is awaiting the runner, the runner must allow himself or herself to be tagged or must slide to avoid the tag. If the umpire feels either the fielder or the runner intentionally caused a collision, the offender may be ejected. A runner who intentionally collides with a fielder in control of the ball is out, whether or not the fielder subsequently holds on to the ball.

J. Fielders must not fake a tag in order to induce a runner to slide.

K. Plaster casts or those made of other hard substances may not be worn during the game.

L. Parent-umpires will not station themselves behind the plate.

M. At the 72nd Street field, all spectators will stay behind the fences (and all the grass). During a game, only coaches and players will be allowed on the grass.

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***EXPLANATION AND INTERPRETATION OF RULE VI:C**

The purpose of this rule is to strike a balance between the need to move the game along, and a desire to let teams recover from a bad start, so that the rest of the game will be more competitive and more fun. If the Cosmos lead the Stars 15-2, this rule allows the Stars to score enough runs in one inning to take a 17-15 lead, where a firm 5-run limit would have kept the game lopsided, at 17-7. At this age level, the philosophy of the League is that players will enjoy the game more in situations where they feel their team has a realistic chance to catch up.

The reason for the exception noted in the rule is to avoid situations where a "visiting" team feels it has lost only because it was barred earlier in the game from scoring as many runs as it might have. A tie in this situation is more satisfactory for all.