

West Sugar Land Little League Handbook Part II: General Rules, Responsibilities & Policies



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1. General Rules

A. Refund policy:

All refunds should be requested by the player's family through the Player Agent. The Player Agent must approve the refund and will then direct the Treasurer to refund the registration fee, minus the processing fee, according to the following guidelines:

- i. Full Refund – refund requested prior to try-outs.
- ii. Partial Refund (70% of registration fee) – refund requested after try-outs but prior to division drafting.
- iii. Partial Refund (50% of registration fee) – refund requested after division drafts but prior to opening day.
- iv. No Refund – refund requested after opening day.

Requests for refunds made outside of the policy guidelines detailed above must be approved by the League President.

- B. Little League (LL) Baseball® rules will govern play in all divisions, except where modified or expanded by local rule, as defined here or in the division-specific Ground Rules of our Handbook. Please see the WSLLL's Umpire-In-Chief for an official copy of the current year's rule book.
- C. Players and Managers will be notified just beyond mid-season about All Stars and will be asked for their interest in participating. Players and coaches need to know that there will be a time commitment involved in the summer. If vacation plans, etc. will prevent a player or coach candidate from participating, please relay that information to your Manager and Division Commissioner.
- D. According to LL rules, in the interest of player safety, no "on-deck" batters are allowed (Rule 1.08, Note 1). This includes the equipment area of each dugout adjacent to each bench. All players must remain in the fenced dugout until their turn at bat. Only the first batter of each half-inning will be permitted outside the dugout for each half-inning (Rule 1.08, Note 2).
- E. In cases of questionable weather conditions, the President or designated board member will notify the league through TeamSnap email by 4:30PM. The league will attempt to reschedule games in as timely a manner as possible.
- F. For games cancelled by weather, Managers should work together in a timely manner to propose alternates to the League Scheduler and Umpire-in-Chief. Managers should refer to field availability published on www.wslll.com.
- G. LL has adopted a Lightning Safety Guideline (see WSLLL ASAP Safety Manual on www.wslll.com). The guideline recommends halting all activities and to find immediate shelter if lightning is observed or thunder is heard. The Club concession stand's breeze-way and inside vehicles are acceptable shelters. The home plate umpire will make the call with the onsite Board Member. A 30-minute wait after the last observation of lighting or thunder is required before activities can resume.
- H. In the event of an injury please reference the league's safety policy. Please see your team's Safety Officer or the league's web site (www.wslll.com) for a copy. Little League Accident Insurance Forms are also available at the above web address. The team Safety Officer should keep each player's emergency contact information (available on the player's registration form) and player's physician's phone numbers on hand during games and practices.

- I. All managers and coaches must always remain inside the fenced dugouts except:
 - i. Base coaches for the offensive team.
 - ii. Coach operating the pitching machine in Machine Pitch Divisions.
 - iii. In T-Ball, the appropriate offensive and defensive coach(es).
 - iv. Otherwise, time out must be requested and received from the plate umpire prior to leaving the dugout area.
- J. All protests are covered by the LL rules (Rule 4.19). If you have any questions regarding rule clarifications, please check with your home plate umpire. Questioning of umpire judgment calls violates Rule 4.19 and The Little League Parent/Volunteer Pledge and is explicitly forbidden.
- K. Select Teams – Select teams are permitted to use WSLLL fields subject to the agreement of the League President and the WSLLL Board. To utilize the fields, Select teams must provide the WSLLL Board with their roster and insurance certificate. To use Club, Cunningham Creek, North or South Field, select teams must have rostered on their team 80% of players who are enrolled in the WSLLL spring season during the spring season and 50% of players who are enrolled in the WSLLL fall season during the fall season. The League President and Board may determine rental rates of the field for each select team. Select Teams using Junior/Senior field shall be pursuant to any contract between that select team and WSLLL approved by the WSLLL Board of Directors. WSLLL games and practices during a season shall have priority over any select team practices.
- L. Behavior by parents, fans, managers, or coaches that is not in the spirit of The Little League Parent/Volunteer Pledge will not be tolerated. This includes yelling, threatening, abusive, or demeaning language to a player or volunteer or behavior that causes a scene or takes away from the kids playing the game. Umpires have the authority to ask a parent, fan, or volunteer to leave the premises. If not followed, the team can be penalized and/or forfeiture can occur.
- M. During the regular season, tie games will not be played out beyond the time limit established for the game (per Section 4 of this document and WSLLL Ground Rules) or six completed innings (seven in Intermediate), whichever comes first. Ties will count ½ win, ½ loss in the official league standings.
- N. WSLLL has elected per LL rules section 4.04 to adopt a continuous batting order for all divisions.
- O. WSLLL has elected per LL rule section 4.10(e), Note 2 to adopt the 10-run “Mercy Rule”. See WSLLL Ground Rules for application.
- P. Any issue not specifically covered by either local ground rules or the LL rulebook will be resolved through consultation with the Division Commissioner and/or President, Umpire-in-Chief, or Rules Committee for the affected division.

2. Personnel & Evaluations

A. Volunteers:

Individuals that wish to manage or coach shall submit a Little League Volunteer Application. A background check on the Applicant is performed. The Board approves and selects Managers.

B. Evaluations:

All players (excluding Target Age T-Ball and Machine Pitch-A) must make every effort to

attend evaluations. Evaluations allow the players to be assessed by Managers and League Representatives. Evaluations give the Managers an idea of the player's current skill and assist in forming balanced teams.

- i. A general evaluation system will be used by the Managers viewing the evaluations. The categories for the evaluation will be hitting, fielding, throwing, running, pop-flies and pitching (for appropriate Divisions). The rating system will be a 1 for the lowest to a 5 for the highest in each category.
- ii. For each Division, Managers and an assigned League Representative will individually assess the Players during the evaluation. The League Representative's role is to help give an independent evaluation for each player. This evaluation and will be available to all Managers during the draft and will be used in establishing the draft round a Manager's player(s) will be selected. Any concerns will be discussed by the Managers, Player Agent, Division Commissioner and/or League President at the draft.
- iii. A player desiring to participate in a Division other than their Target Age Division must attend both their Target Age Division Evaluation and desired Division Evaluation. (See Ground Rules for a more detailed explanation.)

3. Division and Team Formation, Drafts & Late Registrants

A. Division and Team Formation:

Divisions and teams per Division for the season will be established prior to evaluations based on the number of players registered.

B. Drafts:

- i. All Divisions other than Machine Pitch-A and T-Ball have a Draft.
- ii. The results from the League Representative assessment for a Division will be available to all Managers of the Division at the draft.
- iii. A serpentine draft order is used. Managers are randomly assigned their draft orders.
- iv. Immediately prior to the draft, Division Managers and Board Member attendees (Player Agent, Division Commissioner, and/or League President) will resolve special considerations such as draft position of the Managers' player, player siblings (when in the same division), and other special requests. In the case where an agreement cannot be reached, the League President, or in absence a Board Member attendee with no interest, will make a final decision.

C. Machine Pitch A and T-Ball:

- i. Players are assigned to a team by the Division Commissioner.

D. Late Registration:

- i. If a player is permitted to register after the evaluations and draft are complete, the Player Agent and League President are responsible for assigning the player to the appropriate team. Players that register after the evaluations and draft are only eligible to participate in their Target Age Division.

4. Game Time

- A. The home plate umpire is responsible for the official game time.

- B. The official start time is the earlier of either the actual start time or the scheduled start time, regardless of whether play has begun, with the following exception:
 - i. If the preceding game is not completed by the scheduled start time, then the official start time will be no more than 10 minutes after the completion of the preceding game.
 - ii. Due to the sunset problem at Cunningham Creek, games may be delayed at the start or stopped during play until the conditions are playable. The Umpire will have the sole responsibility for determining when conditions warrant no-play and when play can start or resume. The game time will stop during this condition.
- C. No inning shall start after the time limit for the game has expired. The time limit will be as follows:
 - i. Time limits for all Divisions are specified in the Ground Rules of that division and/or tournament ground rules. Time Limits of all doubleheaders will be 1 hour 40 minutes.
 - ii. This rule may be suspended during play-off or tournament play with approval from the WSLLL's Board of Directors.
- D. All game time limits apply to individual game slots only and not to total game time. A suspended game which is continued will play for the length of time allowed by the new game slot.
- E. When a game is officially complete, both teams must vacate the field immediately.
- F. The changeover between innings is limited to 60 seconds, beginning as soon as the final out is made in the preceding half-inning. A new inning starts when the previous inning is completed, and the defensive team is off the field. The home plate umpire will monitor and enforce this rule.

5. Pool Player System

- A. WSLLL uses a Pool Player system to help minimize rescheduling and forfeiting of games due to player absences. Per Section V(c) of the LL Rule Book, the Pool Player Agent will develop the official list of pool players for each division.
- B. Prior to the first game of the season, the Pool Player Agent will request that each team from every Division submit the names, emails, and phone numbers of any players that have agreed to be Pool Players. The list will include their regular team, emergency contact names and phone numbers and the player's physician's phone number.
- C. A pool player(s) may only be used when a team has less than 9 players and would be forced to forfeit. For playoff games, a pool player(s) may only be used when a team has less than 8 players.
- D. Pool Player(s) in both regular or play-off games are restricted to the outfield only and must bat in the last position in the batting order.
- E. All pool players are assigned by the Pool Player Agent. When a player is requested, the Pool Player Agent contacts the players from their official list of Pool Players. This process continues until a player is found. If the need for an additional player is requested, the Pool Player Agent continues the process.
- F. Coaches are not permitted to directly contact pool players.
- G. Players not on the pool player list are not allowed to participate as a pool player unless approved by the league President or Vice President.
- H. If a regular player(s) arrives during the game and the team can field a team of 9 regular

players, the regular player(s) may enter the game immediately. A pool player may remain in the game but must meet minimum play requirements for that division.

6. Pre-Game Rules:

- A. Each manager must provide copies of their batting order to Plate Umpire, opposing Manager, and official scorekeeper in accordance with LL's rules. The lineup shall include players' first and last names, jersey numbers, and starting positions.
- B. The hitting of baseballs (regular or safety) into the fences (soft-toss) is always strictly prohibited. Plastic "whiffle" balls are suggested as an acceptable alternative for this type of drill.
- C. On-field warm up, including pre-game outfield practice, will be limited to the time available. Areas are available adjacent to each field for pre-game warm up. These areas must be used to ensure games start on time
- D. In the Minor through Major Divisions, each team will be given up 25 minutes for defensive warm up (infield and outfield) while the other team is using the batting cage. After 25 minutes, the teams will rotate between the batting cage and field. This is only permitted when field conditions permit (i.e. no additional work is required to make the field playable) and the field is available (i.e. no game underway), the following is permitted. The 10-minutes prior to the start of the game, all infield and outfield warm-up will stop to allow time to set the field.

7. Team Responsibilities - Season

- A. Each team is responsible for cleaning their dugout and stands.
- B. Each team shall assign a volunteer for the following roles:
 - i. Team Parent – assist Manager in duties and assignments.
 - ii. Safety Officer – Be familiar with League Safety Plan, coordinate player health contact sheets, ensure First Aid Kit is stocked, evaluate playing conditions and equipment.
 - iii. Pitch counter (for all kid pitch divisions) – Count pitches thrown by both teams. Between innings pitch counts will be compared. Each team is responsible for verifying the pitch count with both managers and the plate umpire at the end of each half inning.
- C. All pitching and game results shall be submitted per League Instructions published on www.wslll.com by both Managers within 24 hours of the completion of the game.
- D. Both managers shall sign the scorebook at the end of the game.

8. Team Responsibilities – Game (Home and Visitor)

A. Home Team:

The Home Team for each scheduled game is defined as the team listed last for that game on the official league schedule (found and updated at www.wslll.com). The Home Team will occupy the third base dugout.

The Home Team is responsible for:

- i. Setting up the field prior to play. This includes setting the bases, marking the base lines and batters' boxes, setting up the pitching machine (in the MP division), and raking and/or watering the field as necessary. Only use line paint on the grass areas (grass base paths, extended foul lines and pitcher mound line for MP only). Chalk is only allowed on the infield skin area around home plate and dirt base paths.
- ii. Supplying two game balls, if the League supplied Managers with game balls prior to the season. Else the Board Member on Duty will supply game balls.
- iii. Keeping the official scorebook.
- iv. Recording the official pitch count. The final pitch count for each player will be recorded in the official scorebook and verified with each manager at the conclusion of the game.

B. Visiting Team

The Visiting Team for each scheduled game is defined as the team listed first for that game on the official league schedule. The Visiting Team will occupy the first base dugout.

The Visiting Team is responsible for:

- i. Cleanup of the field after the game. This includes putting away the bases, putting up the pitching machine (in the MP division), raking the field, and policing the trash in and around the dugout areas.
- ii. Providing concession stand volunteers at both the Club and Cunningham Creek fields. No game will be started without concession stand volunteers in place. The league is not responsible for the concession stand at the Sports Complex fields.
- iii. Operating the scoreboard.

9. Batting Cage Rules

A. General Rules

- i. The following ground rules have been established to ensure the safe and efficient usage of the batting cages adjacent to the baseball fields. These rules must always be adhered to during use of the batting cages. Individuals and/or teams observed to be in violation of said rules are subject to loss of privilege, as deemed appropriate by the WSLLL Board of Directors.
- ii. The batting cages are intended for use only as designed, not as "play" areas. If the batting cage is not being actively used for its intended purpose, it must remain closed. Children are not permitted to play in the cage under any circumstances.
- iii. Abusive use and/or damaging of the batting cages will result in immediate removal and loss of privilege.
- iv. During use, only one (1) player is permitted in the cage at a time to hit. Players awaiting their turn shall do so outside the fenced cage. Standing between the netting and the fence, or behind the protective pitching screen inside the cage, is not permitted.
- v. All batters are always required to wear a LL approved protective batting helmet while in the batting cage.
- vi. When in use, the access gate must be closed, so as prevent outside observers from being exposed to hit balls

- vii. No unsupervised "practice swinging" is permitted immediately outside the cage area. Soft-toss hitting, using whiffle-type balls, is allowed outside the cage fence, with adult supervision.
- viii. If hitting "live" pitching in the cage, an adult must be used as the pitcher for all divisions
- ix. If a pitching machine is being used inside the batting cage, the pitcher/feeder must be an adult only
- x. There is a protective pitching screen provided in each batting cage. It must always be used to protect the pitcher from hit balls. This applies even when a pitching machine is being used.

B. Practice Priorities

- i. The batting cage at each field is considered part of the practice facility for that field. As such, teams with league-authorized, scheduled practices have usage priority for the batting cage during their entire allotted practice time slot.
- ii. If no such league-authorized practice is scheduled, use of the batting cage is on a first-come-first-serve basis. If additional individuals/groups are waiting to use the batting cage during these times, use is limited to 30-minute intervals for each individual/group.

C. Game-In-Progress Priorities

- i. Teams with a league-authorized, scheduled game have exclusive-use priority of the batting cage at that field. This priority starts at one hour prior to the scheduled start of said game, and extends to 10 minutes prior to the scheduled start of the game
- ii. The Home Team has priority use of the batting cage starting at one hour prior to their game's scheduled start. This priority lasts for 25 minutes
- iii. The Visiting Team begins its priority use of the batting cage at 35 minutes prior to their game's scheduled start. This priority also lasts for 25 minutes.
- iv. During the final 10 minutes preceding the scheduled start of a game, neither team involved in the scheduled game is permitted to use the batting cage. This is beneficial to starting games at their scheduled time.
- v. Teams involved in playing a game are not permitted to use the batting cage during their game.
- vi. Teams and/or individuals not participating in the current game are permitted the use of the batting cage, in accordance with the rules and priorities defined in the preceding paragraphs.

10. All Star Selection Rules – Players

- A. The Board will determine the age groups/divisions of All-Star teams WSLLL will be fielding for post-season Tournament play. Past teams included Majors, 11/10, 10/9, 9, 8U, and 7U.
- B. To be eligible to participate on an All-Star team, players are required to play in at least 60% of the season games. End of season tournament games do not count towards this requirement.

- C. Players and Managers shall be notified just beyond mid-season about All Stars and will be asked for their interest in participating. Players and Managers are required to reply to the League to be considered for All-Stars.
- D. All Star teams (League Age groups 9 – 12 years old) will be selected as follows:
 - i. A minimum of 12 players and maximum of 13 players are selected for all All-Star Teams.
 - ii. An eligible player (league age 11 or 12) at the Majors level that elects to play in a Division lower than Majors will not be eligible for Majors All Star selection.
 - iii. Players may only vote for players in their age division.
 - iv. Five (5) players will be chosen by vote of the players in the age division
 - v. Six (6) players will be chosen jointly by vote of the regular season managers and the All-Star manager in the age group.
 - vi. The All-Star manager may choose the 13th player for that age group's All-Star team.
 - vii. Regular season managers and the All-Star manager may replace a selection from the players by unanimous vote and approval from the Division Commissioner and the League President.
 - viii. If a replacement player is required, the League President will choose the replacement player from a list of alternate players generated by the regular season managers and All-Star manager.

11. All Star Selection Rules – Managers

- A. At the end of season, all managers and coaches of a division are eligible for All Star Management. Managers and Coaches must have managed or coached in a division with the League Age of the players of the All-Star team and have been a manager or coach on the field for 60% of the games in the Regular season. End of Season tournament games do not count towards this requirement.
- B. The interested managers and coaches may make themselves available to be listed on a ballot by notifying the League President and Division Commissioner(s). The Commissioner of each Division will oversee the voting and tally the votes along with the help of one other Board member if possible.
- C. The Board will discuss the qualities of the two candidates who received the most votes from their peers.
- D. If the President and Division Commissioner(s) feel that a third candidate should be nominated, then this candidate will also be discussed.
- E. The Board will vote on the candidates. The candidate who receives the highest votes, will be chosen as the All-Star Manager.
- F. Once the chosen candidate has accepted the role of All-Star Manager, he/she can then choose his/her coach(es) from the remaining pool of divisional managers and coaches from the season.

12. WSLLL Umpire Policies

- A. Per to the LL Operating Manual, "The umpire represents authority on the field of play. On the field, the umpire's is the final word, the absolute decision. A good umpire knows the rules and has the ability to apply them in action and split-second judgment". Our league is very interested in developing a broad core of capable volunteer umpires, and will operate under the following guidelines:
- B. Any volunteer meeting the League's requirements for volunteers (Standard volunteer application, etc.) will be eligible to serve as a Team Umpire for Machine Pitch, Minor and Varsity League games. Any volunteer who is league age 13-18 will be eligible for WSLLL's Junior Umpire Program and will be subject to the meeting of normal and customary LL volunteer application requirements or any other standard WSLLL volunteer requirements.
- C. WSLLL will classify those volunteers who have passed a rules class test as League Umpires and prioritize them to serve as plate umpire for Machine Pitch, Minors, Varsity, and Major Division Games, and as field umpires for Majors games.
- D. WSLLL League Umpires will be used for Junior and Senior League games and paid umpires will be used when League Umpires are unavailable.
- E. Junior Umpire Incentive System
 - i. Any Junior Umpires who volunteers for a minimum of 10 games per season (Spring or Fall) will receive a \$50 gift certificate. Games volunteered must be logged with WSLLL Umpire-in-Chief.
- F. League and Game Assignments
 - i. WSLLL will be using a "Team Umpire", "Volunteer Umpire", and "Paid Umpire" system to ensure that enough umpires are provided for all games. The Team Umpire system will invite teams from the MP-AAA/AA, Minors, and Varsity Divisions to provide a parent volunteer umpire to work as a field umpire at every game.
 - ii. The Paid Umpire system will provide one Umpire for all Minors and Varsity Division Games and two Umpires to work all Majors Divisions Games.
 - iii. A League Supplied Volunteer Umpire (unpaid) will be provided for all Machine Pitch AA/AAA Division Games. A Board Member on Duty will be assigned to all Machine Pitch AA/AAA Division games as well.
- G. League Supplied Umpires: The league will endeavor to supply a League Umpire per the follow section:
 - i. T-Ball: There is no umpiring at the T-Ball level.
 - ii. Machine Pitch A: One Team Umpire is provided by the defensive team in each half inning (no League Supplied Umpire).
 - iii. Machine Pitch AA/AAA: The Home team supplies the Home Plate umpire. The Visiting team supplier the Field umpire. A Board Member on Duty is assigned to all Machine Pitch AA/AAA Division games.
 - iv. Minor/Varsity Division Games: One (1) WSLLL Paid Umpire is assigned. Teams are invited to supply one (1) Field Umpire.
 - v. Major and Intermediate Division Games: Two (2) WSLLL Paid Umpires are assigned to each game.

- vi. Junior and Senior League Games One (1) WSLLL Paid Umpire and one (1) additional Team Umpire or a WSLLL League Umpire are assigned to each game.
- H. Umpire Training: An Umpire Rules and Mechanics training will be held each season. See the League's web site for details and dates.
- I. Umpire Equipment: Paid League Umpires work as independent contractors and must supply their own equipment conforming to Little League Rule 9(a). Extra umpire equipment will be available for volunteer umpire use upon notice. Regulations for attire can be found in the WSLLL Umpire Policies and Procedures published on the League website www.wslll.com.