

LOCAL RULES CHECKLIST

There are a number of places in the Little League Regulations and Rules where a local league's Board of Directors is either required to, or has the option to, make choices regarding the rules and regulations that will be used. This document is intended to serve as a checklist of the various items that a league should consider on an annual basis. In addition, a few items that are not explicitly covered by the rulebook, but which a league is recommended to consider, are included.

Note that, once a league chooses its options, those choices must then be enforced consistently throughout the year.

AGE STRUCTURE AND THE VARIOUS DIVISIONS

Regulation I(a)(3): 7-year olds may play Minor League or Tee Ball depending on the local structure and ability of the players.

This appears to imply that a league may choose to:

- *Have all 7-year olds play in Tee Ball*
- *Have all 7-year olds play in Minors*
- *Select, on a case-by-case basis, whether an individual 7-year old will play in Minors or Tee Ball based on an evaluation of the player's ability.*

- Regulation III(a) The Local League may elect to roster fewer than 9 players at the Tee Ball/Non-Competitive Minor level.
- Regulation III(c) The Local League may elect to allow 4-year olds to play Tee Ball.
- Regulation III(d) The Local League (or district, if the Big League is administered as a district operation) should specify in its local rules the number of days allowed for a manager to comply with selection of a replacement.
- Regulation III(d) A league may adopt a local rule prohibiting replacements from the Minor League program onto a Little League (Majors) Division team during the last two weeks of the regular season schedule.
- Regulation IV Players league age 12 are eligible for the Junior League division at the option of the local league board of directors.
- Regulation VIII(b) The Local League should establish a policy, approved by the Board of Directors, regarding players who decline to move up to a major league team.

PLAYER POOL

Under Regulation V(c), leagues have the option of establishing a pool of players, administered by the Player Agent, who are willing to fill in when a team does not have enough players. Consult the rulebook for a description of how this is to be administered, should the league elect to use this provision.

GAME SCHEDULES

Regulation VII(d) When League size and limited field availability require leagues to schedule more than one game on the same night and on the same field, the league may be permitted to impose a time limit on the first game.

If this provision is adopted, the league should determine what will happen if the game has not yet become official when the time limit is reached.

Regulation VII(h) Minor League and Tee Ball: A Local League may impose a time limit on games regardless of the number of innings played. It is recommended that no league standings be kept, and no championship games be played.

In addition, leagues should establish procedures for what will happen if:

- A game cannot be begun because one or both teams have insufficient players or do not have a coach or manager available.
- If a game cannot be continued because injury, illness, ejection or other causes result in a game not being able to be continued due to insufficient players or coaches/managers.
- If a game cannot be begun due to weather conditions, or must be suspended due to weather prior to becoming official, or when tied.

FIELD CONDITIONS AND SIZES

Rule 3.13 The Local League will establish ground rules to be followed by all teams in the league.

Note: the term “ground rules” refers to rules associated with the physical conditions of the field, such as what happens if a ball hits branches hanging over a fence. This is not a license to change official Little League rules.

Rule 1.04 Tee Ball option: The infield may be a 50-foot square.

Rule 1.04 Base paths of 80 feet are optional for Junior League regular season play only. 54 feet pitching distance is optional for Junior League regular season only.

Rule 5.10(b) A league may adopt its own regulations governing games interrupted by light failure.

It is suggested leagues adopt a policy that a play that is interrupted by light failure, sprinklers, etc. should be replayed starting from before the last pitch, while a game that is interrupted by this (or other man-made causes) and cannot be resumed within an acceptable time period should be suspended and completed later. (This helps ensure that a game is not decided by something man-made, and thus possibly deliberate.)

PLAYING RULES: TEE-BALL

Rule 1.01 Tee ball is traditionally considered to be non-competitive. As such, the league may allow the use of more than nine players on defense.

Rule 4.10(e) Tee Ball: The Local League may determine appropriate game length but shall not exceed 6 innings. It is recommended that Tee Ball games be 4 innings or 1-1/2 hour time limit.

PLAYING RULES: MINOR LEAGUES

Regulation VIII(d) A Local League may elect to utilize adult pitch (“Minor League Coach Pitch”) or machine pitch (“Minor League Machine Pitch”) in Minor League games involving players league ages 7-12.

It is permissible to have more than one Minor League division, and to use different pitching methods in different divisions.

Rule 1.01 In non-competitive Minor Leagues, the league may allow the use of more than nine players on defense.

Competitive Minor Leagues are required to use only nine defensive players.

Rule 5.07 Minor League: The side is retired when three offensive players are legally put out, or when all players on the roster have batted one time in the half-inning, or when the offensive team scores five (5) runs.
OPTION: The local league board of directors may suspend the five-run rule in the last half-inning for either team.

PLAYING RULES: CONTINUOUS BATTING ORDER

Rule 4.04 The use of the Continuous Batting Order is mandatory in Minors and Tee-Ball. It is optional in the other divisions – the league has the choice of using CBO or not in Majors, Juniors, Seniors and Big League.

The Little League Rules and Regulations do not completely provide for the situation in which, during a game played under the Continuous Batting Order, the batter or a base runner is injured and unable to continue. In the absence of the CBO, a substitution would simply be made, however this cannot be done when all players are in the batting order. Each league should establish a procedure for handling this. Recommendations for possible procedures:

1. If, in a game being played using Continuous Batting Order, a player on base is injured or ill and must be replaced, he/she will be replaced by the most recent batter not currently on base.
2. If, in a game being played using Continuous Batting Order, a batter becomes injured or ill during his/her time at bat, one of the following procedures might be adopted.
 - a. The player is treated as if he/she was ill/injured at the beginning of the at-bat per 4.04, is skipped over without penalty, and the next batter takes his/her position in the batter’s box with no-ball, no-strike count.
 - b. The next player in the lineup takes the place of the injured/ill player and assumes his/her current ball/strike count.

Of course, neither 2a nor 2b is a perfect solution – in the first case, the pitcher “loses” any strikes he/she may have thrown, while in the second case, the replacement batter gets less than the full at-bat. Hopefully, this situation will arise only rarely.

PLAYING RULES: TEN-RUN RULE

Rule 4.10(e)(2) The local league may adopt the option of not utilizing this rule.

If the league fails to explicitly elect not to use this rule, then it is in effect for all games. Leagues may elect to use this rule for some divisions and not to use it for other divisions. It is not permissible to choose to use it or not use it on a game-by-game basis.

PLAYING RULES: PROTESTS

Rule 4.19(f) A committee composed of the president, player agent, league's umpire-in-chief and one or more other officers or directors who are not managers or umpires shall hear and resolve any such protest as above, including playing rules.

Ideally, leagues should establish the members of the Protest Committee in advance.

Rule 4.19(g) Minor League: A Local League may adopt a rule that protests must be resolved before the next pitch or play.

ALL-STAR TOURNAMENT SELECTION

Leagues are strongly advised to establish, at the beginning of the year, the procedures via which:

1. Players will be chosen for All-Star teams
2. Managers and coaches will be chose to run All-Star teams

Doing this in advance can save considerable controversy at the time the All Star selections actually take place.