



San Francisco Little League Playoff Rules Spring Season 2025

The 2025 SFLC playoffs will begin in late April (Juniors) and May (small diamonds) and conclude with Championship Games on May 31 & June 1 (small diamonds) and a best of three game championship series on May 20, 21, and 23 (Juniors). Exact dates will vary by division and are posted on Sports Connect.

Please remind your players and parents and spectators to demonstrate proper behavior during the playoffs. Playoff games are more competitive, and we always want to follow the Coach and Parent Codes of Conduct that are posted at <https://www.sflc.org/Default.aspx?tabid=1713691>.

Remind parents to never yell at, criticize or even offer advice to an umpire (even in a polite manner). Comments should be directed to the coach or a league administrator after the game.

Enthusiastic cheering is encouraged. However, cheers should focus on encouraging your players and not deriding the opposition. Cheering should stop as soon as the pitcher starts their motion to the plate.

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PLAYOFF COMMITTEE

Rookie Players Agents:	Matt Schneiderman (646-263-8705) Jason Morse (650-315-5859) Eric Flemming (503-449-2952)
AA Players Agent:	Tony Berning (646-492-0180) James Nash (415-518-5144)
AAA Players Agent:	Cory Acree (415-385-1760) Hale Walker (707-287-5404)
Majors Players Agents:	Bob Hillman (415-203-1611) Sumner Estes (415-283-6889)
Juniors Players Agents:	Howard Holderness (415-244-0344) Jay Harris (415-706-9411)
Umpire-in-Chief:	Brian Sauer (415-225-6618)
VP Players Agents:	Josh Bagley (415-994-0535)
SFLL President:	Katherine Gillespie (415-812-7099)

PLAYOFF FORMAT

The playoffs will be a two-stage format. The first stage will be pool play. The second stage will be a single elimination bracket.

FIRST STAGE – POOL PLAY

All teams will advance to pool play. American League teams will play in the American League pool and National League teams will play in the National League pool. During pool play, each team will play every other team in their pool once. For pool play, home and away will be preset by the schedule (these games are already scheduled). The regular season standings will have no impact on pool play. Pool play begins the last week of April (Juniors) and the weekend of May 4 (small diamonds).

Ties

Ties are allowed in pool play games.

If teams within a pool are tied with the same record at the completion of pool play, then ties will be broken using the following criteria:

1. Head-to-head record in pool play
2. The total number of runs allowed per inning for all pool play games (for shortened games count actual number of innings played). Lower is better.
3. Coin flip as administered by the Player Agent

If there is a three-way tie, after one team is determined to be the tiebreaker winner using the tiebreakers, remaining ties will be broken by starting over at the first tiebreaker.

The top four teams from the American League pool and the top four teams from the National League pool will advance to the second stage.

SECOND STAGE – SINGLE ELIMINATION

Rookie - Majors Divisions: The top four teams from the American League and the top four teams from the National League will advance to a single elimination bracket. There will be four quarterfinal games and two semifinal games. The four teams from the American League will play in the American League quarterfinals and the four teams from the National League will play in the National League quarterfinals.



The teams in the quarterfinals will be seeded #1 through #4 based on their standings following pool play. The #1 seed will play the #4 seed in one quarterfinal game and the #2 seed will play the #3 seed in the other quarterfinal game.

The winning teams from the American League quarterfinals will face off in the American League semifinals. The winning teams from the National League quarterfinals will face off in the National League semifinals. The winning semifinalists will advance to an American League versus National League championship game.

Juniors Division: All three teams from the American League and all three teams from the National League will advance to a single elimination bracket. The teams will be seeded #1 through #3 based on their standings following pool play. There will be two quarterfinal games and two semifinal games. The #2 and #3 seed teams from the American League will play in the American League quarterfinal round and the #2 and #3 seed from the National League will play in the National League quarterfinal round.

The #1 American League seed will play the winner of the American League quarterfinal in the American League semifinal round, and the #1 National League seed will play the winner of the National League quarterfinal in the National League semifinal round.

All Divisions: Throughout the single elimination bracket, the higher seeded team (based on pool play results) will be the home team. If two identically seeded teams meet, then the home team will be determined by a coin flip conducted by the VP of Player Agents and observed by the Division's Player Agent.

CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES

The championship games will be scheduled as follows:

- Rookie: May 31
- AA Minors: May 31
- AAA Minors: June 1
- Majors: June 1
- Juniors: best 2 of 3 series May 20, 21, and 23 (if necessary)

RULES

Coaches should be familiar with the Green Book, Local Rules, and these Playoff Rules. The Green Book and SFL Local Rules apply UNLESS superseded by the Playoff Rules.

Parent/Fan Code of Conduct

There have been several instances of parents or fans using foul language and/or harassing the umpires. If this happens - do not ignore it. **Coach should ask for time** and warn the fan that talking to the umpire is not allowed. **If it continues, umpires are instructed to call time and inform the coaches that the game will not continue until that fan is quieted down or leaves the field. Also tell them that the team connected to that parent/fan will forfeit the game if it continues. If you get to this point - call Brian Sauer (415.225.6618), Division Player Agent (See Above) and/or Josh Bagley (415.994.0535)**



Mandatory Play

In Majors and below, a player may not sit out consecutive innings or sit out a second inning before every other player has sat out once. No player can sit out three innings until every other player has sat out two, etc.

Short on Players

There will be no Pool Players available during the playoffs. A game may not be started nor continued with fewer than eight players on each team. A completed game will be deemed official if one or both teams have only 8 players. **SFLL is eliminating the “automatic out” rule.** The team that is short on players may not borrow a player to fill a spot on the field, but rather must compete with their available players. Teams may wait up to 30 minutes **past the posted field time** for an 8th player who is running late. If both teams have fewer than 8 players during pool play, the game will be reported as a double forfeit. If during the Single Elimination stage, both teams have less than 8 players, the higher seeded team will be awarded the win (no game will be played).

Adult Participation

Teams are allowed only three (3) approved, background-checked coaches and/or adult volunteers in the dugout or acting as base coaches during a game. Umpires will be instructed to stop play if more than three adults are with the team. One adult must always be in the dugout when players are present.

Coaches need to assist umpires in keeping family members off the field. All non-coaches or approved volunteers must be outside the fenced areas.

Base Coaches

We encourage the use of a player as one of your base coaches because it helps keep them involved in the game. However, at a coach's discretion, two adult base coaches may be used provided they are both registered coaches and there is an approved third adult inside the dugout. NOTE: Coaches are NOT allowed on the field during live play, except within base-coach boxes (please use good judgment and stay within base coach's area whether or not the boxes are chalked/lined) or when the umpire grants time after a coach requests permission.

Rookie, Minors AA/AAA – Rule 5.07

Rule 5.07: A half-inning ends when the defensive team records three outs or the offensive team scores five runs, whichever comes first. **The five-run rule is suspended for the entirety of the final inning, whether that's the 6th or another inning as determined by the umpire in consultation with both coaches prior to the first pitch of the final inning.**

Game Time Requirement: An official game must run 1 hour 45 minutes or 6 (7 Jrs) innings. Games should start no later than 30 minutes after the field permit start time. **SFLL strongly encourages that teams arrive at the field and are ready to play at the scheduled time so that the games can go the full 6 (7 Jrs) innings. Games should not be held for more than 15 minutes to wait for a player. If a team cannot field the minimum number by that time, the game will be ruled a forfeit.**

If a player arrives late to a game, they will be placed at the end of the batting order and not into another slot.

If two teams start but do not finish an inning due to time expiring or the sunset, the score reverts back to the end of the previous inning.



Game Termination: Pool Play

- **Game Termination:** Coaches should confer with umpires during the pre-game meeting at the plate and that everyone agrees upon the timing for when the game will terminate under this rule. With the exception of the last game of the day on Treasure Island, no new inning may start less than fifteen (15) minutes prior to the start time of the following game or expiration of an RPD permit. If an inning has not concluded by the start time of the following game or the expiration of an RPD permit, play must immediately stop at that time and the field must be vacated as quickly as possible. For the last game of the day scheduled on Treasure Island only, game play may continue through six innings or until the umpires determine in their sole discretion that darkness or other conditions deem the game unsafe to play. If an inning is incomplete when a game terminates, the score will revert back to the score at the end of the last inning.

As the game nears the end-time, consider if the game will go the full 6 innings. If it is going to be close, inform the coaches of the stop time. When the end time arrives - the game should be called by the umpire..

Once the first pitch of a game has been thrown, the umpires have full and unilateral discretion to decide when a game must be terminated early because darkness, rain, or other field conditions make continued play unsafe. **Anytime an inning is not complete, the score reverts to the last completed inning.**

Game Termination: Single Elimination

- *Rookie and Juniors:* Single elimination games that take place on a SFRPD, FS or PG field will follow the Pool Play rules above.
- *AA/AAA and Majors:* Single elimination games that take place on a SFRPD or FS fields will follow the Pool Play rules above. Single elimination games that take place on Treasure Island are expected to go the full 6 innings, so coaches should ensure that players are at the field and ready to play at the scheduled start time. In the event of a delay or unforeseen situation and six innings cannot be completed in the allotted time, the pool play rules will apply.

Mercy Rules (Green Book Rule)

For all divisions Majors and below, the game ends if one team has a 15 run lead after 3 innings or a 10 run lead after 4 or 5 innings. SFLC suspends the 8 runs after 5 innings rule (Rule 4.00)

Stealing Signs

Sign stealing is not permitted in SFLC and penalties will be assessed to offending parties, potentially including ejection and suspension (see Rule 9.01(d)). **Concerns about unsportsmanlike conduct of any kind should be directed to the division's Player Agent and/or SFLC President.**

Player Conduct

Players are not allowed to disrupt the game with excessive cheering/chanting while a pitcher is delivering the pitch. Coaches are responsible for keeping players in check.

PROTESTS

If there is a valid protest pursuant to the Green Book, please immediately call the Player Agent for your division. The Player Agent has the authority to immediately resolve all valid protests. If the Player agent cannot be reached, please call the Chief Umpire Brian Sauer. If you cannot reach the Player



Agent or the Chief Umpire, continue playing the game under protest and the league will rule on the protest after the game has concluded.

Video Reviews

The use of Game Changer or any other gameplay video to settle a disagreement during a live game is strictly prohibited. In the case of an official protest, SFLL and the Umpire team may elect to view video if it is relevant to a situation that is not a judgment call (i.e. Strike, Ball, Safe, Out).

POSTING RESULTS

All game results need to be entered into Sports Connect by the home team on the same day the game is played – no exceptions. All game results must be entered accurately (pitch counts, runs, and innings) and confirmed by both coaches. All coaches should understand how to correctly report the pitch count when a pitcher crosses a days rest threshold during the pitcher's final batter. The coaches should confer at the completion of the game to confirm pitch counts to be recorded. There will be no changes to game results after they are entered into Sports Connect.

PITCH COUNT AND DAYS REST

All coaches should review and understand Green Book Regulation VI regarding pitch count rules, days of rest requirements, and restrictions relating to a player pitching and catching in the same game. The Green Book Regulation VI will apply to all divisions during the playoffs, with the following exceptions:

- **Rookie:** A pitcher may pitch no more than six consecutive outs in a game. For example, if a pitcher records the final out of their first inning pitched, they will only be able to pitch two outs in their final inning (for a total of six consecutive outs). Green Book pitch count rules supersede the number of consecutive outs.
- **AA:** A pitcher may pitch no more than nine consecutive outs in a game. For example, if a pitcher records the final out of their first inning pitched, they will only be able to pitch two outs in their final inning (for a total of nine consecutive outs). Green Book pitch count rules supersede the number of consecutive outs.
- **AAA:** A pitcher may pitch no more than nine consecutive outs in a game. For example, if a pitcher records the final out of their first inning pitched, they will only be able to pitch two outs in their final inning (for a total of nine consecutive outs). Green Book pitch count rules supersede the number of consecutive outs.
- **Majors:** None
- **Juniors:** None

PITCH COUNT FOR YOUTH PLAYING ON NON-SFLL TEAMS

Many youth play on non-SFLL teams (i.ee SFYBL, CYO, travel ball). SFLL requires that when teams calculate pitch count and days rest (see below), it includes non-SFLL teams. Coaches should be aware of players who are on other teams and communicate with the parents/guardians and coaches so that they do not violate SFLL rules for pitchers. **It is always encouraged for coaches to err on the side of caution when it comes to the safety of our youth.**

If there is a suspected violation, coaches and/or others involved will communicate the details with the Umpire-in-Chief (sflumpire@gmail.com) and Divisional Player Agent. The UIC and PA will consider the situation and decide if the violation is valid.



If a violation is deemed valid, the penalties will be:

1st violation: Team forfeits the game

2nd Violation: Team forfeits and Head Coach is suspended 1 game

3rd Violation: Team forfeits and Head Coach is suspended indefinitely

LEAGUE AGE	
AGE	PITCHES PER DAY
6-8	50 Pitches
9-10	75 Pitches
11-12	85 Pitches
13-16	95 Pitches

Little League Baseball® pitchers league age 14 and under must adhere to the following rest requirements:

- 66+ pitches – 4 days rest
- 51-65 pitches – 3 days rest
- 36-50 pitches – 2 days rest
- 21-35 pitches – 1 days rest
- 1-20 pitches– 0 days rest