

SMLLA Majors - LL Rule Clarifications, Local Rules and Setup

2025 Spring Season

The following include additions to the 2024 spring document. The 2025 managers can adjust as desired.

COACHING

1. [NEW EDIT] Defensive coaches must stay as close to the inside of the dugouts as possible. If managers/coaches are calling pitches, it is HIGHLY recommended that they do so from inside the dugout. IF a manager/coach must sit on a bucket, they are NOT allowed to be a distraction to any players or umpires while calling pitches.

Coaches may stand **JUST** outside the dugouts when adjusting the defense.

A. American (and NL) are lax on this. Last year, we had coaches on the foul line.

1. [NEW] All equipment should be stored in the dugout or outside the fences.
 - a. If a ball hits equipment in fair play, it is a dead ball.
 - a. Any runner will be given an extra base IF the equipment is associated with the other team. *The team who left the equipment in the field of play should be the ones penalized.*
 - b. **EXAMPLE:** Visiting team leaves catchers gear outside 1B dugout. When they are hitting, the Home team overthrows 1B and the ball hits the Visitor's equipment. The ball is Dead. The runner will **NOT** advance to 2B. If the same thing happened to the Home team, the runner would be given 2nd base.
2. **Roster differences [playoffs only]**
 - a. If there is a difference of **TWO** players between teams AND the TWO missing players are "bottom half" players (**Rounds 7-12**), then the team missing players

takes an out after the last batter in the lineup. The pitcher records **ZERO** pitches for that out. The rationale is to minimize an advantage gained by missing players. * This would be a SMLLA rule, NOT a LL rule.

a. Example:

- Yankees have 10 and Royals have 12. Yankees missing draft picks 7 and 11. Then Yankees take 1 out after the 10th batter.
- Giants have 10 and Yankees have 12. Giants are missing draft picks 1 and 11. The Giants do not take an out. this scenario is different because missing a "top half" player is a disadvantage

2. Playing time

- a. SMLLA requires at least THREE innings in Regular Season and Playoffs. LL is 2
- a. Every player will sit out for a full inning (or 3 outs) **before** any player sits 2 innings.
- b. Every player will sit out TWO full innings (6 outs) before any player sits **THREE** innings

c. Exceptions

- Sitting player is injured and unable to play
- Sitting player was benched due to disciplinary issues (ex. Poor sportsmanship)
- Player that hasn't sat is the pitcher or catcher that started the game prior to any player sitting out an inning.
 - **Example:** Starting pitcher throws complete game. That pitchers and catcher don't have to sit before another player sits twice.

- **Example:** Starting pitcher throws 5 innings and then comes out of pitching. Other players have sat 2 innings. Pitcher will sit the 6th inning.

- a. **Repercussions (for manager):** First time is a warning. Second time is a 1 game suspension. Third time is removal.
- b. For Playoffs, the Commissioner will make every attempt to be at games to manage this. During the regular season, we need to hold each other accountable (honor code).

2. Coaches on the field

- a. **THREE** coaches are allowed on the field during games. More than 3 are allowed for pre-game warm-ups only
- a. Older kids “helping coach” count as one of the 3 coaches on the field

2. Player Pool

- a. A team can request a substitute from player pool if they have 10 or less players confirmed
- a. Majors Commissioner will assign Player Pool subs. The Commissioner, if needed, will consult with the Player Agent and managers of teams not involved in the game requiring a sub.
- b. Commissioner will assign a player selected at a comparable draft round of the **AVERAGE** of the kids missing. **Example:** If a team is missing 2 players (1st round draft pick and 12th round draft pick (average draft round is 6.5, the substitute will be from the 6th round or later).

- c. Managers making a substitute request will not provide input on a desired player.

Managers will accept the decision made by the Commissioner.

- d. Substitutes bat last, cannot pitch or catch, can play a max of 2 innings in the infield during a **SIX-inning** game (more in extra innings).

2. Players returning from injury can play field but not bat.

- a. With parent approval
- a. Player can play the field but not bat (without taking an out)
- b. Managers are encouraged to share this information with the Manager group in advance of the game.

2. Minimum time in the infield

- a. Managers are required to play every player in the infield at least one inning **UNLESS** the player has specifically requested, AND the player's parent(s) have affirmed, that they do **NOT** want to play in the infield. IN this case, the Manager is not required to play them. IN this scenario, managers should share this info with the manager group AND commish so we have it ON record.

2. Managers or Coaches ejected from a game are not eligible to participate in the next game [LL Rule]

3. Hurt player [Little League Rule]

- a. A hurt batter, fielder, or base runner may exit the game and return at any point without penalty (ex. No out is taken for their spot in the order). A hurt base runner should be replaced with the last batted out.
- a. **Example:** A player hit by pitch can have a pinch runner if the player is unable to stay in the game. They may re-enter the game when capable.

OFFENSE

1. **Home Run:** A ball must leave the park in order to be a Home Run. A ball that strikes the yellow guard rail (aka the “Meza Line”) is considered in play. If a fielder catches a ball that bounces off of the yellow guard rail, the play is live. The batter is not out and able to advance at their own risk.

2. Slash bunting

- a. Slash bunting will be allowed in Majors
- a. Managers will discourage the stronger, middle of the order, hitters from doing it.
- b. There will be no penalty should these players do it but the Commissioner will issue a warning to ensure player safety.

2. Courtesy runner for Pitcher and Catcher

- a. A courtesy runner will be allowed for pitchers and catchers of record when there are TWO outs. That courtesy runner must be the player in the batting order who made the last out.
- a. If the last batted out is the Pitcher or Catcher, the runner should be the previous batted out to that player.
- b. Courtesy runner is eligible for both Pitcher and Catcher in the same inning

2. Players stepping out

- a. Managers will encourage players to not step back from a pitch.
- a. Umpires will be instructed to call the pitch as it is. Specifically, if a player steps back it is NOT an automatic strike.

2. Runner interference on a potential double play

- a. Managers should encourage runners to slide on a potential double play.
- a. Umpires will be instructed to NOT automatically call the runner and batter out for interference unless the runner makes a “willful and deliberate” attempt to interfere with the fielder. Ultimately, this is the umpire’s discretion

2. Sign stealing

- a. Sign stealing is against Little League rules. Managers will discourage it
- a. Umpires have the discretion to determine what is sign stealing
- b. When an umpire identifies any player stealing signs, they will
 - 1st instance - provide a warning. Pitch will not count
 - 2nd instance - player stealing sign or batter will be out. Pitch will not count
 - 3rd instance - player stealing sign will be removed from the game
- a. When an umpire identifies a coach stealing signs, they will
 - 1st instance - provide a warning. Pitch will not count
 - 2nd instance - Batter will be out. Pitch will not count. The coach will be removed from the game

- 2. **No On deck batters** [LL rule]. In between innings, the next batter up can take warm-up swings...Not 2 or 3 batters.

DEFENSE

- 0. Safety base. Continue to use it to avoid collisions. **Note:** All star tournaments typically don’t use Safety base.

0. **Defensive players** may only use the Safety base when covering on an inside throw on a dropped 3rd strike.

0. Shift

- a. In innings 1-5, the defensive team can only have 6 players in the infield (including the pitcher and catcher)
- a. In innings 6+, the defensive team can have up to 7 players in the infield [Updated '24]

SCHEDULING AND ROSTERING

1. **Playoffs are single elimination.** Board decision (VP of Scheduling) but Managers have input
 - a. The schedule will be
 - . Seed 1 and 2 have byes
 - i. Seed 3 plays 6; 4 plays 5 on Saturday
 - ii. In the 2nd round, 1 plays the winner of 4 vs 5; 2 plays winner of 3 vs 6 on Sunday
 - iii. Championship game is Wednesday
 2. **Number of players per team.** Board decision (VP of Rostering) but Managers have input
 - a. Every Majors team will have ??? players (**11 OR 12**)
- 2. Max practice times**

- a. Managers are encouraged to limit practice times to 1 field practice and 1 hitting session per week.

- a. But there is no maximum number of practices per week.

2. Private batting cages versus Trinta

- a. Managers may use private batting cages like SLU. Keep in mind - this is an additional expense for your families.

2. Replacing players that leave the team. Board Decision

- a. If a player leaves a team (or is unable to play the remainder of regular season games due to injury or other commitments), they will be replaced by the first baseball 11 from PCL taken in the 3rd round or later that agrees to move up.
Should a player not agree to move up, the next player drafted will be asked.
- a. If a player leaves the team before the midpoint of the season (ex. Game 10 of a 20 game season), they will be replaced.
- b. If a player leaves the team after the midpoint of the season (ex after Game 10 of 20), the manager will decide whether to replace them.

2. Pre-season Inter-league play with National

- a. Every team will have 2-3 scheduled games with National
- a. Wins / Losses will not count the team's standings
- b. Canceled games will be made up at the Managers' discretion
- c. Pitch counts DO count against player's eligibility for ensuing games.
- d. Maximum 2 innings pitched per player per game (for interleague games vs National only)

2. **Postseason Majors Cup with National.** Played on a mutually agreeable date. **The American team that plays in this Majors Cup will be the Playoffs champion.**

3. Extra innings

- a. Regular Season Games can end in a tie. If the score is tied after 8 innings, the game will be a tie.
- a. For Regular Season and Playoff games (excluding the championship) In the 8th inning, a runner will be placed on 2nd base. The runner will be the player immediately preceding that half-inning's leadoff hitter [Updated '24]
- b. For the championship game, no runner will be placed on 2B in the 8th inning or beyond.

2. Rescheduling rainouts

- a. The League Scheduler will make a reasonable effort to accommodate scheduling requests from affected teams.
- a. The League Scheduler makes the decision as to when the game will be played. If a manager disagrees, they can appeal to the Board.

2. Calling a game due to weather

- a. The Umpire has the discretion to delay a game due to danger (lightning, darkness)
- a. The Board members or Tommy decide whether a game should be canceled.

2. Make up games

- a. Pitch count does restart for the pitcher of record. If you are the pitcher of record (or not have pitched at all) and threw 83 pitches in game that was postponed, as long as the make-up is 4 days rest or later, you can throw another 85 when it is restarted

- a. Catcher rules don't apply, a kid can catch more than 4 in the OG game and reset for the make-up.
- b. If you were removed from the game, you are done for the continuation.
- c. Double header rule applies so if you have two games in one day. You can't pitch in both.
- d. Kids that missed the first game can play in the make-up – just bat last.
- e. Kids that miss the restarted game do not count as an out. They are just skipped in the line-up.

PITCHING

1. Max Pitch counts

- a. **Max pitch count per day will be 45 (March), 65 (April), 85 (May)**
- a. Violation of pitch count rule results in the suspension of the manager for the next game.
- b. Pitcher is ineligible to pitch in that game and next game.

2. Max pitch counts for the season

- a. There is no max pitch count for the season

2. Number of players that pitch

- a. Managers are encouraged to give as many kids as possible the opportunity to pitch.
- a. There is no required number of pitchers per team.

2. Pitch counts from non-SMLLA games

- a. Managers and Parents are encouraged to respect pitch counts from non-SMLLA games (ex. Travel ball games) towards pitcher eligibility. **Example:** If a player threw 55 pitches for their travel ball team on Saturday. They are required to rest for 3 days.
- a. While not responsible for tracking non-SMLLA pitch counts, Managers are encouraged to make a reasonable effort to understand a pitcher's pitch counts, communicating closely with players parents on an ongoing basis.
- b. Managers should encourage Parents and Travel ball managers to respect pitch counts, but it is not their responsibility to ensure it is enforced.

2. Quick Pitching

- a. Managers will discourage quick pitches
- a. When a pitcher blatantly quick pitches, the Umpires will be instructed to
 - . 1st instance - provide a warning and pitch will count as a no pitch
 - i. 2nd instance - provide a warning and pitch will count as a ball
 - ii. 3rd instance - pitch will count as a ball and pitcher will be removed from the mound [Updated '24]
- a. The umpire has the discretion of what is considered a pitch delivered before the batter has a reasonable amount of time to prepare.