

West Madison Little League Atlantic League – Local Rules, 2011

All national “minor” division Little League rules in current season rule book apply unless specifically changed in these local rules, or by past practice. The WMLL Safety Plan contains further regulations which will be enforced as local rules.

Base Coaches. Adults may be base coaches when their team is at bat. All coaches, if not coaching a base, must stay within three feet of the dugout entrance.

Base on Balls and Hit Batsman. There will be no walks, intentional or unintentional, or hit batsmen allowed in this league.

Base Running. At the conclusion of a play base runners may advance no further than the base to which they are headed at the point the ball is secured in the pitcher’s hand.

Bat Throwing. A player will receive one warning each game for inappropriately throwing the bat. For any subsequent instance of throwing the bat in that same game the player will be called out. The warning and out can be on the same at bat. If a hitter is called out for throwing the bat the ball will be dead and any runners must return the base which he/she occupied prior to the pitch. Note: this rule applies to accidental bat throwing while or after swinging at a pitch, not to bat throwing in anger or protest.

Batting Cages and Soft Toss Stations. A soft toss station is available for pregame practice. Only wiffle balls, tennis balls, or other soft surface balls are permitted for soft toss. The home team can use the soft toss station for thirty minutes beginning seventy minutes prior to the game, and the visiting team can use the soft toss station for thirty minutes beginning forty minutes prior to the game. Batting cages are for pregame practice for Central, Major, Badger and Senior league teams. Atlantic league teams can use the batting cages but must vacate them if asked to do so by a team, which will be playing a game, from the Central, Major, Badger or Senior leagues. Pregame batting practice can take place only in a batting cage or soft toss station.

Batting Order. When everyone is in the batting order, if a player is unable to continue play there will be no penalty to the offensive team when that individual is scheduled to bat. If able, the player can reenter the batting order without penalty.

Bunting, Squaring to Bunt then Swinging. WMLL believes the act of squaring to draw infielders in, and then swinging away is dangerous to charging infielders. Coaches should not permit their batters to engage in this action. ***Note: this statement represents WMLL’s philosophy; it is not a national or local rule. Umpires will not enforce a sanction. Anyone concerned that a coach or team is not adhering to this philosophy should contact the appropriate league coordinator.***

Courtesy Runner. A courtesy runner may be used for the catcher at any time, but is mandatory when there are two outs. This runner will be the individual who made the last out in the inning.

Defensive Positions. Each team shall field ten players when on defense. Four of those players must be outfielders and take positions on the outfield grass.

Dugouts. Only uniformed players, the manager, two coaches and one scorekeeper are permitted on the bench. The manager should require all others to leave the dugout. Players must stay in the playing area or on the bench during the game unless the manager permits them to leave. During a game, the only individuals allowed outside of the dugout are the defense team, the batter, base runners, manager and base coaches. Each team must clean up their respective dugout and area after a game or practice.

First Base. In games on the Minor Field a double first base will be used. When, on the initial play, there is a play at 1st base, the runner must touch the orange portion of the base while the fielder must touch the white portion. If there is no play the runner may touch the white.

Forfeits for Lack of Players. If a team does not have seven players to participate in a game, that team will forfeit the game. A team has fifteen minutes from the schedule starting time to obtain seven players before a forfeit is declared. When both teams have less than seven players, a double forfeit occurs. If a team expects to be short of players, the team manager should obtain replacement players according to Atlantic League's rules (see "Replacement Players"). The only exception to this rule occurs when a team has less than the required number of players due to a scheduled school event in May or June. Contact the league coordinator, if this occurs, so that the game can be rescheduled. If a team forfeits a game, the game will not be replayed.

Game Time Limits. All regular season games shall be six innings or one hour and thirty minutes, whichever comes first. A game which ends due to the time limit will be considered a complete game regardless of the number of innings played. Tie games will not be completed if the time limit has expired, or seven innings have been completed. If a game is tied at the end of six innings but the time limit has not been reached a seventh inning may be played and the game will end at the conclusion of the seventh or when the home team goes ahead in the bottom of the seventh, whichever comes first. The umpires will enforce the scheduled starting time and the time limits for each league. Insist that your players hustle on and off the field between offense and defense so that the game proceeds quickly.

Game Start & Ending Times. For the purposes of the one hour thirty minute time limit the official start time of the initial game of the day will be the scheduled start time regardless of the time of the first pitch. For example if the initial game's scheduled start is 4pm, but the first pitch is not delivered until 4:10pm, the time limit expires at 5:30pm. The only exception is for a weather related delay. Games after the initial game of the day must start ten minutes after the final out of the previous game or the scheduled start time, whichever is later. The official game starting time and ending time, when the last out in the last inning is made, should be recorded on the scorecard.

Harassment of and Disputes with Umpires.

1. The league will not tolerate any harassment of the umpires by managers, coaches, players or fans or any harassment / organized cheering against any opposing player or team.
2. The umpires will not tolerate any abusive language, equipment throwing or other violent behavior by managers, coaches, players or fans.
3. Any person guilty of participating in these actions will be warned once by the umpires. Second violation will result in ejection from the game and removal from the WMLL field areas. In severe instances the offending party will be immediately ejected. The umpire will report such ejections to the umpire coordinator who will notify the Baseball Operations Committee Chairperson. Unsportsmanlike behavior which results in a game ejection carries with it another one game suspension. For a second game ejection there will be an automatic three game suspension and for a third game suspension, the individual will receive a season ending suspension.
4. To question an umpire's ruling only the manager is to represent the team. He/she must call time out and calmly consult with the umpire. A manager must not run out of the dugout or yell objections. The manager should provide the players and fans with an exemplary model of sportsmanship.
5. During all consultations with umpires about their rulings, the manager must remain in foul territory. To check on an injured player's status, the manager/coach may be on the playing field after an umpire requests their assistance.

Helmets. For league games helmets with face masks will be used by batters, base coaches and runners. The home and visiting managers will be responsible for getting from and returning to the concession stand storage area a set of six helmets for each game.

Home Team. The home team occupies the first base dugout. The home team will provide two new regulation baseballs, and a concessions worker.

Infield Fly. There will be no infield fly rule in this league.

Line up Cards. Line up cards are to be exchanged between the managers at the beginning of the game to indicate the starting players, all eligible substitutes, absent and injured players and players who are being disciplined by not participating.

Maximum Number of Hitters/Runs in Inning. A batting team has a ten run maximum per inning, and there is no maximum to the number of hitters who may bat before the tenth run is scored. Any half inning which does not end by national rule will end as soon as the tenth run is scored.

Pitchers Position. When the pitch is delivered the player in the pitcher's position must have at least one foot on the dirt area of the pitcher's mound, forward of the point where the ball leaves the machine.

Pitching Machine. The pitching machine and cord are in play. However, if a batted ball becomes lodged under the machine so as to be unplayable, the umpire shall have the discretion to call a replay. If a thrown ball becomes lodged in or under the machine as to be unplayable, the ball shall be declared dead and the base runners will be awarded the base to which they were heading when the ball was declared dead. The umpire may call a "no pitch" when the machine obviously malfunctions. An obvious malfunction is defined as a ball which hits the ground before reaching the dirt area around the batter's box. If a player swings at such a pitch before "no pitch" is called, it will be considered a legal pitch. An adult coach of the offensive team is required to operate the pitching machine.

Playing Time. Each player shall be in the batting order. Each player shall play at least four innings defensively, and one of those defensive innings must be at the position of pitcher, catcher, or one of the infield positions. Minimum defensive innings in this rule must be full half innings.

Playing Time Rule Exceptions. The only exceptions to the playing time rule will be:

1. If a player misses practices and/or games without a valid reason, the coach may decide to reduce the number of innings played in the field for the next game by a maximum of one inning. Absences due to family vacations should not affect playing time.
2. If a player arrives late for a game, the manager can decide to reduce the number of innings at his/her discretion.
3. If a player is being disciplined, a manager must inform the opposing manager prior to the game or immediately after an incident which requires removal, for the participation rule to be satisfied. The player who is being disciplined should be advised of why he/she is not participating. If the discipline results in the player being "docked" more than one inning below the league minimum, the coach must inform the League Coordinator in writing of the discipline and the cause. This method of disciplining should be used with reasonable discretion.
4. If a game is shortened because of the time limit, inclement weather or run limit, all players will not be required to satisfy the playing rule.
5. If an eligible player does not fulfill the participation rule, that player must be a starter in the team's next game and play the whole game. Any manager who violates this rule will be subject to dismissal by the league's Baseball Operation Committee.

Pregame Practices. The teams may warm up prior to games in appropriately designated areas. Players should be cautioned to be careful when warming up so other individuals are not injured. No infield or out field practice will be allowed on the diamond prior to the game.

Post Season WMLL Rules. All regular season rules apply except those which are noted under the specific league later in this hand book. There will be no time limit for championship games except these games can be called because of darkness on the minor league field. Winning players and coaches will receive trophies or medals as determined by the Board of Directors.

Replacement Players. A team which anticipates forfeiting may use other WMLL registered Atlantic League player(s) to field a team so that a game can be played, even though the game will still be considered a forfeit. The coach of the team forfeiting the game must inform the opposing coach before the game starts. The replacement player(s) must be last in the batting order. If unanticipated roster player(s) shows up for the game bringing the total of the regular roster players to nine or more, the replacement player(s) may not be used unless the game is a forfeit.

Roster Maintenance. Each team must maintain a roster of at least thirteen players. If a player roster drops below thirteen due to injuries and/or lengthy vacations (more than two weeks), a replacement will be selected from the waiting list by contacting the league coordinator.

Sliding. On close plays at 2nd base, 3rd base or home plate, the runner is required to slide or to avoid collision with a defensive player who has the ball while located within the batter's box area or within the vicinity of another base. If a contact is made and the runner did not slide, the umpire shall call the runner out for offensive interference. A defensive player without the ball who impedes a runner, whether intentional or unintentional, or who fakes a tag will be penalized for defensive obstruction. The umpire will award the runner the base or bases they are attempting to reach. When a runner initiates malicious contact with any fielder, with or without the ball, in or out of the baseline, the umpire shall eject the runner for the game. The runner has the primary responsibility to avoid a collision with the defensive player.

Stealing. No base stealing is permitted.

Strike Zone. The strike zone is larger than the standard – the width of the plate from the middle of the shin to the shoulder. The intent of a larger strike zone is to get hitters to become more aggressive and to speed the game along.

Uniforms. Players must be in full uniform to be eligible to play in a game. Umpires will be instructed to strictly enforce this rule. Players will be instructed to wear their uniforms only at WMLL approved functions. Managers are responsible for collecting player uniforms at the end of the season which will be turned into the league coordinator if requested.

Visiting Team. The visiting team occupies the third base dugout and is responsible for operating the scoreboard.

Weather.

1. If inclement weather has occurred, the field manager will determine if and when the field is in playable condition. A sign in the parking lot and a message on the answering machine (274-6556) will indicate when games are postponed because of weather.
2. If a field is not playable at game time, but might be playable in a short period of time, the game will be delayed no more than fifteen minutes. The conditions will be checked after fifteen minutes and, if the field is still unplayable, the game will be canceled and rescheduled by the coordinator. Do not ask for or expect preferential treatment in the rescheduling of games.

3. If a rain / lightning / lighting failure delay occurs after a game has started the first fifteen minutes of the total delay time does not count as part of the game time limit. When the game has been delayed for thirty minutes or more, the game will be considered either a suspended contest or an officially completed contest depending on the inning and the score.
4. When lightning is visible, the Board of Director(s) / umpires present will suspend the game for fifteen minutes and all coaches, players, spectators and umpires will take immediate shelter in the dugouts, near the concession stand or in private vehicles to insure their safety. After this fifteen minute delay, if lightening continues the board of director(s) / umpires present will call the game.
5. A game called after completion of two innings and before it is an official completed contest will be considered a suspended game. A suspended game shall be resumed at the exact point of suspension. The line ups and batting order of the teams shall be the same as the moment of suspension, subject to the substitution rules. A player who was not at the original game may be used as a substitute when the game is resumed. Prior to leaving the field of play, the coaches will verify the line ups, score and exact point at which play has been stopped i.e. outs, balls and strikes batter, runners score, etc. Any dispute should be referred to the league coordinator and/or Baseball Operations Committee for resolution. The league coordinator shall attempt to reschedule the suspended game at the time when the two teams will be playing each other again. The suspended game will be played prior to the regulation game or another suspended game. All pitching regulations will be determined by the week during which the suspended game is being resumed.
6. These rules will not restrict the Board of Director(s) present at the field from immediately canceling play at WMLL fields in order to insure the appropriate safety of coaches, players, spectators, umpires and concession workers.

New Rules & Rules of Emphasis - Atlantic Lg 2011

Base Running. At the conclusion of a play base runners may advance no further than the base to which they are headed at the point the ball is secured in the pitcher's hand.

Bat Throwing. A player will receive one warning each game for inappropriately throwing the bat. For any subsequent instance of throwing the bat in that same game the player will be called out. The warning and out can be on the same at bat. If a hitter is called out for throwing the bat the ball will be dead and any runners must return the base which he/she occupied prior to the pitch. Note: this rule applies to accidental bat throwing while or after swinging at a pitch, not to bat throwing in anger or protest.

Bats. Only bats meeting national rules may be used at WMLL. In the Atlantic League bats shall be no more than 33 inches in length, nor more than 2 ¼ inches in diameter. Little League has issued a **moratorium on the use of composite bats**. The moratorium disallows the use of bats constructed with composite material in its barrel, unless the specific model of bat is approved in Little League sanctioned laboratory testing. The moratorium does not affect the use of aluminum metal/alloy bats. For the latest information on the moratorium, check the WMLL website home page (www.wmll.org). The list of approved bats is subject to frequent change, so please check back often for updates (updates will be posted as soon as they are received from Little Lg Int'l).

Batting Cages and Soft Toss Stations. A soft toss station is available for pregame practice. **Only wiffle balls, tennis balls, or other soft surface balls are permitted for soft toss.** The home team can use the soft toss station for thirty minutes beginning seventy minutes prior to the game, and the visiting team can use the soft toss station for thirty minutes beginning forty minutes prior to the game. Batting cages are for pregame practice for Central, Major, Badger and Senior league teams. Atlantic league teams can use the batting cages but must vacate them if asked to do so by a team, which will be playing a game, from the Central, Major, Badger or Senior leagues. Pregame batting practice can take place only in a batting cage or soft toss station.

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Courtesy Runner. A courtesy runner **must** be used for the catcher when there are two outs. This runner will be the individual who made the last out in the inning.

Dugouts. Only uniformed players, the manager, two coaches and one scorekeeper (**maximum of 4 adults**) are permitted on the bench. The manager should require all others to leave the dugout. Players must stay in the playing area or on the bench during the game unless the manager permits them to leave. During a game, the only individuals allowed outside of the dugout are the defense team, the batter, base runners, manager, base coaches, and pitching machine operator. Each team must clean up their respective dugout and area after a game or practice. **Penalty: one bench warning to the team; subsequent violations will result in the team forfeiting the game.**

First Base. In games on the Minor Field a double first base will be used. When, on the initial play, there is a play at 1st base, the runner must touch the orange portion of the base while the fielder must touch the white portion. If there is no play the runner may touch the white.

Game Time Limits. All regular season games shall be six innings or one hour and thirty minutes, whichever comes first. A game which ends due to the time limit will be considered a complete game regardless of the number of innings played. Tie games will not be completed if the time limit has expired, or seven innings have been completed. If a game is tied at the end of six innings but the time limit has not been reached a seventh inning may be played and the game will end at the conclusion of the seventh or when the home team goes ahead in the bottom of the seventh, whichever comes first. The umpires will enforce the scheduled starting time and the time limits for each league. Insist that your players hustle on and off the field between offense and defense so that the game proceeds quickly.

Game Start & Ending Times. For the purposes of the one hour thirty minute time limit the official start time of the initial game of the day will be the scheduled start time regardless of the time of the first pitch. For example if the initial game's scheduled start is 4pm, but the first pitch is not delivered until 4:10pm, the time limit expires at 5:30pm. The only exception is for a weather related delay. Games after the initial game of the day must start ten minutes after the final out of the previous game or the scheduled start time, whichever is later. The official game starting time and ending time, when the last out in the last inning is made, should be recorded on the scorecard.

Head First Sliding. Head first sliding when advancing is prohibited with the penalty of the offender being called out.

Offensive Time Outs. Limited to one per inning (this includes base coaches coming down the line to have a conference with a batter).

On Deck Hitters. No on deck hitters are permitted in the Minor and Major divisions (8-12 year olds).

Playing Time. Each player shall be in the batting order. Each player shall play at least four innings defensively, and one of those defensive innings must be at the position of pitcher, catcher, or one of the infield positions. Minimum defensive innings in this rule must be full half innings.

Strike Zone. The strike zone is larger than the standard - the width of the plate from the middle of the shin to the shoulder.

Swinging of Bats. Players ARE NOT PERMITTED to swing a bat unless they are in an approved soft toss station, in a batting cage or in the batters box. *Penalty: one warning per team; subsequent violation results in game ejection for offender.*

Warm-Up Areas. Pitchers warming up prior to or during the game shall do so in each field's designated area. Pitchers shall throw from the area closest to the dugout. Catchers will be located farthest away from the dugout.