

West Madison Little League Central League – Local Rules, 2011

All national little league rules in current season rule book apply unless specifically changed in these local rules or by past practice in particular league. 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.

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 shortly after swinging at a pitch, not to bat throwing in anger or protest.

Batting Cages and Surrounding Spaces. The home team can use a batting cage for thirty minutes beginning seventy minutes prior to the game and the visiting team can use a batting cage for thirty minutes beginning forty minutes prior to the game. Soft toss and other pregame batting practice can take place only in a batting cage or in an area officially designated for that purpose. Only wiffle balls, tennis balls, or other soft surface balls are permitted for soft toss.

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.***

Coaches Visits to Pitchers. A coach is permitted two visits per pitcher during a game with any defensive timeout being considered as a visit. On the third visit to a pitcher, he/she must be removed from the mound.

Courtesy Runner – Central. A courtesy runner must be used for the catcher when there are two outs. This runner will be the individual who made the previous out in the inning. If the previous out is the scheduled pitcher the courtesy runner may be the out prior to that.

Dugouts. Only uniformed players, the manager, one coach 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.

Forfeits for Lack of Players. If a team does not have eight players to participate in a game, that team will forfeit the game. A team has fifteen minutes from the scheduled starting time to obtain eight players before a forfeit is declared. When both teams have less than eight players, a double forfeit occurs. If a team expects to be short of players, the team manager should obtain replacement players according to his league's rules. 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 forty-five minutes. Tie games will be played until a winner is determined. A game which ends due to the time limit will be considered a complete game regardless of the number of innings played. For games played Sunday-Thursday while the Madison Metropolitan School District is in session and when school is scheduled the next day, no game will continue past 10pm. Score and outcome will be determined in the same manner as in a game shorted by rain. Please begin the initial game of the day on time unless the field is not playable or the umpires are not present. 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 umpires will enforce the scheduled starting time and the time limits. Insist that your players hustle on and off the field between offense and defense so that the game proceeds quickly. The official game starting time and ending time, when the last out in the last inning is made, should be recorded on the scorecard. The first pitch of a half inning must be delivered not longer than 90 seconds after the third out of the previous half inning. Penalty: the umpire may call a strike on the batter if the violation is by the offensive team, or a ball on the batter if the violation is by the defensive team. The umpire may continue to call strikes or balls each 20 seconds until the first pitch is delivered.

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.

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

Ineligible Pitcher. Any violation of the pitching rules will result in the ineligible pitcher being removed from the pitching position and an automatic protest which will be ruled on by the Baseball Operations Committee. The game will continue with a new eligible pitcher and both scorebooks should note the ineligible pitcher's name and the inning in which the violation was said to have occurred.

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

Intentional Base on Balls. No intentional walks are allowed. A coach, who directs his pitcher to deliberately walk any batter, will be subject to severe disciplinary action by the Baseball Operations Committee.

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. In pitching leagues the manager will also list each player who has pitched in the past week indicating when he/she pitched and the number pitches thrown in each outing.

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.

Pitching – Breaking Balls for Younger Pitchers. WMLL believes it is potentially harmful for pitchers younger than the Senior League level to throw breaking pitches. Coaches below the Senior League level should not teach or permit pitchers to throw breaking balls. ***Note: the above statement represents the philosophy of WMLL; it is not a national or local rule. Umpires will not enforce any sanction for the alleged throwing of breaking balls. Anyone concerned that a team or coach is not adhering to this philosophy should contact the appropriate league coordinator.***

Pitching – On Field Warm Ups. On field warm up pitches prior to each half inning are limited to a maximum of four.

Pitching – Pitch Count Rules. In all leagues with pitch count rules each manager shall maintain an accurate pitch count for each individual who pitches in a game. A counter will be provided to each team by WMLL. The manager will record the pitch count and innings thrown for each pitcher and, prior to each game, indicate to the opposing coach the name of each pitcher who has thrown in the past week along with dates and number of pitches thrown in each outing.

Pitching Rules. A pitcher may pitch no more than 75 pitches or two innings whichever comes first. For the purposes of this rule throwing one pitch in an inning constitutes an entire inning. If a pitcher exceeds 75 pitches because he/she is completing a hitter's at bat that pitcher's days of rest will be determined as though he/she had stopped at 75 pitches. After having been removed as a pitcher a player may not return to the mound in the same game. All other provisions of the national rule for baseball pitchers 11 and 12 apply as written.

Pitching – Ten Year Olds. On a team with one or more players Little League age ten on the regular roster (ie not including called up substitutes), a ten year old must pitch for a minimum of three consecutive outs or five batters in every week. For the purpose of this rule the week is defined as games played from Saturday through Friday. Note: the League Coordinator has authority to waive this rule under certain circumstances.

Pitching – Time Limit Considerations. The first pitch of a half inning must be delivered not longer than 90 seconds after the third out of the previous half inning. Penalty: the umpire may call a strike on the batter if the violation is by the offensive team, or a ball on the batter if the violation is by the defensive team. The umpire may continue to call strikes or balls each 20 seconds until the first pitch is delivered.

Playing Time. Each player in attendance must be listed in the batting order, and each player shall play at least four innings defensively. 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 Tournament. A post season tournament will be organized and the tournament will be seeded. Brackets will be posted on the field bulletin board two weeks before the start of the tournament with seedings to be posted after the last regularly scheduled league game. Coaches will be notified directly of changes due to weather and other factors. The championship game will be played without time limit.

Post Season WMLL Rules. All regular season rules apply except those which are noted in these local rules. Winning players and coaches will receive trophies or medals as determined by the Board of Directors.

Replacement Players. If you know in advance that you will have fewer than ten players for a game, call the league coordinator for approval of a replacement player(s). If the league coordinator cannot be reached, then, and only once for a season, may a replacement player be called directly. Replacement player(s) must be taken from the Pacific League. A team may use a given individual as a replacement player only one time during the regular season and one additional time during the league tournament or playoff. The replacement(s) may not pitch and must be last in the batting order. If unanticipated roster player(s) show up bringing the total of the regular roster players to nine or more, the replacement(s) should still play, but may play defensively only the league minimum number of innings. Players needed for playoff and league tournament games must be approved in writing by the league coordinator. A team using a replacement player must notify the opposing team coach of his/her use.

Roster Maintenance. Each team must maintain a roster of at least twelve players. If a player roster drops below twelve due to injuries and/or lengthy vacations (more than two weeks), a replacement will be selected from the Pacific League or from the Central League waiting list, by contacting the leaguer coordinator. Players called up from the Pacific League may not pitch and must bat last in the line up.

Run Differential Rule. If a team is leading the game by twenty runs or more at the end of four innings or three and one-half innings if the home team is leading, the game is considered complete even if the time limit has not been reached.

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 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. A base runner may not steal home. If a runner is on 3rd when the pitcher delivers a pitch, the runner may not score on a wild pitch, a passed ball, or throws by the catcher immediately after the pitch to the pitcher, or 1st or 2nd base. In all other situations, the runner may advance as allowed by normal baseball rules.

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.

Tournament Teams. See Tournament Team policy.

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 messages on the answering machine (274-6556) and the website (www.wmll.org) 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 lightning 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 – Central Lg 2011

Bats. Only bats meeting national rules may be used at WMLL. In the Central 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.wml.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).

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 Surrounding Spaces. The home team can use a batting cage for thirty minutes beginning seventy minutes prior to the game and the visiting team can use a batting cage for thirty minutes beginning forty minutes prior to the game. Soft toss and other pregame batting practice can take place only in a batting cage or in an area officially designated for that purpose. ***Only wiffle balls, tennis balls, or other soft surface balls are permitted for soft toss.***

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.***

Coaches. Coaches, except base coaches, are to remain within 3 feet of dugout entrance during play.

Coaches. Coaches may confer with any other player(s), including the catcher, during the visit with the pitcher. A coach who is granted a time out to talk to any defensive player will be charged with a visit to the pitcher.

Courtesy Runner. A courtesy runner **must** be used for the catcher when there are two outs. This runner will be the last out in the inning. If the last out is the pitcher the runner may be the previous out.

Dugouts. Only the head coach and no more than two adult assistants, and participants in uniform may be in the dugout during games. Siblings, parents, friends, other players etc are not permitted. ***Penalty: one bench warning to the team; subsequent violations will result in the team forfeiting the game.***

Game Time Limits. The following has been added to the rule: ***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.*** See local rules for full text of Game Time Limits rule.

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.

Pitcher/Catcher. A pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of the day. A pitcher who throws 40 or fewer pitches in a game may catch in the same game.

Pitching – Application of Rules. Pitching rules, including pitch counts and rest days, apply to all WMLL sponsored games, including interleague or special games which may not count in WMLL standings.

Pitching – Breaking Balls for Younger Pitchers. WMLL believes it is potentially harmful for pitchers younger than the Senior League level to throw breaking pitches. Coaches below the Senior League level should not teach or permit pitchers to throw breaking balls. ***Note: the above statement represents the philosophy of WMLL; it is not a national or local rule. Umpires will not enforce any sanction for the alleged throwing of breaking balls. Anyone concerned that a team or coach is not adhering to this philosophy should contact the appropriate league coordinator.***

Pitching – On Field Warm Ups. On field warm up pitches prior to each half inning are limited to a maximum of four.

Pitching in Consecutive Games. In addition of observing days of rest mandated by pitch count rules, a player who throws 41 or more pitches in a game may not pitch in the team's next scheduled game.

Pitching Rules. Rule has been revised to clarify definition of an inning. A pitcher may pitch no more than 75 pitches or two innings in a game, whichever comes first. ***For the purposes of this rule throwing one pitch constitutes an inning.*** See Local Rules for full text of Pitching Rules.

Pitching – Ten Year Olds. On a team with one or more players Little League age ten on the regular roster (ie not including called up substitutes), a ten year old must pitch for a minimum of three consecutive outs or five batters in every week. For the purpose of this rule the week is defined as games played from Saturday through Friday. Note: the League Coordinator has authority to waive this rule under certain circumstances.

Replacement Players. A team may use a given individual as a replacement player only one time during the regular season and one additional time during the league tournament or playoff.

Stealing. A base runner may not steal home. If a runner is on 3rd when the pitcher delivers a pitch, the runner may not score on a wild pitch, a passed ball, or throws by the catcher immediately after the pitch to the pitcher, or 1st or 2nd base. In all other situations, the runner may advance as allowed by normal baseball rules.

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 (on deck hitters are permitted only in the Badger and Senior Lgs). *Penalty: one warning per team; subsequent violation results in game ejection for offender.*

Tournament Teams (All-Star Teams). Player eligibility is changed to follow national Little League rules – play in 60% of regular season games as of June 15; only exceptions granted are for absences due to play on school sponsored baseball team. Sizes of rosters have been reduced, and number of teams increased. See tournament team policies for more details.

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

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.