

LOS GATOS LITTLE LEAGUE 2008 T-BALL AND COACH PITCH POLICIES

The following are policies developed by Los Gatos Little League over the years to ensure a safe, valuable and enjoyable season for all participants consistent with our mission statement: ***Los Gatos Little League's mission is to develop fundamental baseball skills while positively reinforcing lessons in teamwork, respect and sportsmanship, both in victory and in defeat.*** These policies have been approved by the Board of Directors and are to be followed by all managers, coaches, players and spectators. Managers are expected to ensure that all coaches, players and spectators associated with their team follow these policies.

As a manager or coach it is your responsibility to be knowledgeable about the rules of play of Little League baseball even for our youngest players. Each team is provided with an official rule book. We know managers and coaches are often busy professionals, juggling jobs, family, baseball and other responsibilities. Please read the official rule book at least once, however, to familiarize yourself with all rules of play. In particular, pay close attention to the safety rules at the back of the official rule book.

Managers may not agree to change these policies or any local or Little League rule at any time. If a manager would like to deviate from these policies in any given circumstance, the manager must obtain prior approval from the T-Ball/Coach Pitch Commissioner.

If you believe that someone has not followed these policies, including issues you are having as a manager or coach with your players, their parents or spectators, you should report the issue to the Commissioner. Managers that believe these policies are not being followed by the opposing team should discuss the issue with the opposing manager. Parents that believe these policies are not being followed by their child's manager or coach should discuss the issue with the manager. If the issue cannot be resolved in this manner, please report it immediately to the Commissioner. Usually these issues are misunderstandings that are best resolved when they occur so that we can ensure a good experience for all involved.

A manager's or coach's failure to ensure that these policies are followed may impact their future selection as a manager or coach. If necessary, the Board of Directors may also remove a manager or coach during the season if it is in the best interests of the league.

Logistics.

1. The T-Ball and Coach Pitch programs are meant to be a place where children can learn the basic fundamentals of baseball while deriving maximum enjoyment from it. The skills of hitting, throwing, fielding, base running and the basic rules of play should be the major focus of training without the pressure of winning being a factor. Of course teamwork and sportsmanship should be taught and shown at all times.
2. Each team should practice once and only once a week in addition to the Saturday game.
3. No score will be kept during games and there are no league standings.
4. Both managers should meet prior to the game to discuss any details either manager wants to discuss (e.g., particular issues, such as bat throwing, with a particular player, etc.).
5. The bench area should be kept for players and coaches only, although parents may come to the aid of their children with the permission or by the request of a manager or coach. A designated parent may assist the coaches with keeping order on the bench. All players should remain on the bench when not batting, on base or in the field. You should consider seating the kids in the order in which they will bat and having them slide down one at a time.

6. The Los Gatos Little League has partnered with the Positive Coaching Alliance. We Honor the Game. As a result, there must be absolutely no negative comments made to any player or coach by anyone (player, coach or spectator). Here is a useful link you may want to share with your families: <http://www.positivecoach.org/parents/guidelines.html>
7. At the conclusion of the game, players and managers must line up to shake hands with the opposing team. Remind your players that this is a time to congratulate the other team for a game well played, and not a time to joke or be abusive (such as saying "bad game").
8. Before distributing the snacks or snack shack tickets or dismissing the players, the teams **must** clean up the field, dugout **and spectator areas**, making sure all trash is placed in appropriate receptacles, even if it is not from your team. This rule also applies following practices too. The league has invested heavily in its fields. **We must build a culture of caring for our fields**. We suggest that players be required to clear all debris from these areas prior to receiving snack shack tickets. Managers may choose another method (such as assigning one or a group of players or parents to accomplish the task) as long as **all** debris is removed. Managers or coaches that arrive to a field of play, dugout or spectator area that is not completely free of debris should report the situation to the Commissioner.

Offense.

1. The hitting team may also have 3 coaches on the field to assist hitters and runners. The hitting team may have coaches at 1st base, 3rd base and home plate (as batting instructor).
2. Helmets must be worn at all times by batter and base runners. If necessary, teams should share helmets. Any player playing the pitcher position must also wear a helmet. Coaches also should not allow a player to be holding a bat unless they are up to bat.
3. Following a hit to the outfield, play stops when the ball is returned to the infield. Runners may continue to advance to a base to which they are already advancing prior to return of the ball to the infield or may return to the previous base. Please do not have a player start running to the next base after the ball has been returned to the infield.

In T-Ball, however, players should advance only one base at a time. In Coach Pitch, players may advance two bases if it is appropriate given the hit of the ball. Coaches should not advance a base runner past first if a defensive player has fielded the ball.

Almost every ball thrown to first results in an overthrow. There will be no advance on any overthrow to first or ball out of play in either division.

4. A dead ball zone will exist in a semi-circle in front of home plate approximately 10 feet down the 1st and 3rd base lines and arching into the field. The batter should return to the plate and the hit to the dead ball zone should be counted as a foul-tip swing.
5. Again, please remember that we are attempting to make this as fun as possible. The worst place in the world for a player, at these levels, is the bench. Generally, runners do not need to be encouraged to advance. Try to teach aggressive running, yet realistic and responsible running (use restraint). Players who are put out do not need to leave the base. There is nothing wrong with the bases being loaded all the time.
6. There is no catcher so there is no base stealing.

Defense.

1. Because we emphasize fundamentals and a learning environment at these levels, the fielding team will be allowed up to 3 coaches in the field to assist players. Coaches must not touch the ball while it is in play.
2. All members of the team will play in the field each inning when the team takes the field (i.e., there are no players on the bench). There is no catcher position, however. Except for the lack of a catcher, you should play a normal infield (with a buck-short at your option) and all other players in the outfield. Free substitution is allowed during each inning, so long as there are never more than 6 players in the infield dirt (pitcher, 1st, 2nd, 3rd base, shortstop, and buck short) at any one time. A player should be placed in the pitching position and this player must wear a helmet.
3. You should rotate players every inning so that they can experience multiple positions, although managers may consider safety when determining which players are placed at first or third base or pitcher. The intent is to ensure all players get roughly equal opportunity to try different positions, both infield and outfield, and keep the game "interesting" for all.
4. There is no umpire since there are no put outs. Any rules which come under question during the games should be resolved by the two managers. When in doubt, remember you are an example to the players. Managers and coaches should focus on teaching their own players the basic rules of play and not worry so much about the "ruling" on the play. What matters most is that the kids have fun and are not upset.

LOS GATOS LITTLE LEAGUE 2008 T-BALL AND COACH PITCH LOCAL RULES

The following are local rules adopted by Los Gatos Little League as allowed by National Little League rules and operating procedures. These local rules will be enforced by game umpires.

As with the LGLL T-Ball and Coach Pitch Policies, managers may not agree to change these local rules at any time. Managers that believe these rules are not being followed should discuss the situation with the umpire in the presence of the opposing team's manager. A manager's or coach's failure to ensure that these rules are followed may impact their future selection as a manager or coach and may be removed by the Board of Directors during the season if it is in the best interests of the league.

1. Games will be 1 hour and 10 minutes in duration, or 3 innings, whichever comes first. Do not go over the time limit even if 3 full innings have not been completed. End the game on time even if a partial inning is played.
2. Prior to the start of the third inning, if the first two innings have taken more than 45 minutes, the coaches should meet to decide if the third inning should be started. It is preferable to call the game after the first two, completed innings if both teams will not get a chance to complete their hitting in the third inning. It is the home coach's decision to waive that rule and commence a third inning after 45 minutes have elapsed, since it will be that coach's team that may not get to complete its hitting. Remember, games must **start on time and finish on time regardless of whether an inning has been completed.**
3. In T-Ball, players should hit off the Tee at the beginning of the season. You should introduce coach pitching in your practices as soon as you have players able to hit from coach pitching. Teams may switch to Coach Pitch pitching rules for any batter who has demonstrated the ability to consistently hit from coach pitching. You may alternate between coach pitching and use of the tee from player to player based on ability.

Coach Pitch will begin the season with pitches tossed underhand from the coach. As the season progresses, coaches may toss overhand to hitters if the coach is confident that the hitter can effectively hit overhand pitches. Please do not throw from a standing position. This develops poor hitting mechanics for the players who will swing up at pitches coming down from six feet high. Coaches should pitch from a kneeling position.

At all times when the coach is pitching to the hitter, the following policies must be strictly followed:

- A. A batter will get a maximum of 6 pitches.
- B. If the batter fouls off the sixth pitch, the coach may continue to pitch to the batter as long as the batter is making contact (e.g., fouling), up to a maximum of 4 more pitches.
- C. After 6 missed pitches, or after 4 consecutive fouls after the 6th pitch, the Tee must be used.
- D. A coach may encourage a hitter to run out a foul ball that is close to in-play in order to avoid using the Tee.

This policy cannot be modified by an agreement of managers. It is necessary to move the pace of play along so that all players get a chance to hit. It is also necessary in fairness to all players. The kids are very aware of this rule when it is applied and feel it is unfair when another player gets more pitches than their coach allows for them.

4. All members of the team at bat will hit one time in each inning (there is no 3 out rule).