

Little League  
SOFTBALL  
**Virginia District 15  
Softball  
Pre-Tournament Meeting**

A large, semi-transparent logo for the Little League World Series is centered in the background. It features the words "WORLD SERIES" in large, bold, white letters with a purple outline. Above it, "Little League" is written in a smaller font, and "SOFTBALL" is written in orange. Below "WORLD SERIES", it says "PRESENTED BY" in small letters, followed by "DICK'S" in large white letters with a purple outline, and "2024" in orange at the bottom.

**12 June 2024**



# Agenda



- Points of Emphasis
- Playing Rules
- Protests
- Suspended Games
- Run Rule
- Regulation Game
- Tie Game
- Altercations and Ejections
- Replacements
- Starting Games, Curfew, and Inclement Weather
- Pre- and Post- Game Activities
- Proper Attire and Behavior
- Summary and Safety Reminder



# Points of Emphasis



- Once the tournament season starts, authority is vested solely in the Tournament Committee at Williamsport.
  - There will be no waivers, resorting to local rules, or other variation unless granted explicitly from Williamsport.
- Revocation of tournament privileges or forfeiture of a tournament game may be decided only by the Tournament Committee at Williamsport. The Committee can also suspend and remove team and league personnel
- The Committee also reserves the right to impose any penalty the Committee deems appropriate, if the committee determines action is necessary to correct a situation brought to its attention, regardless of the source of that information
- The decision of the Tournament Committee is final and binding



# Points of Emphasis



- The International Tournament has specific rules and guidelines outlined after rule 9 within the baseball and softball rule books.
- There is no deviation from these rules and guidelines.
- Specific rules are outlined that replace the rule that was used for the regular season.
- Knowledge of the tournament rules and guidelines is necessary for all tournament officials prior to assuming the role



# PLAYING RULES



- All Tournament play shall be governed by the 2024 Little League Softball® Official Regulations, Playing Rules, and policies as amended by the Tournament Rules and Guidelines
- During the Little League® International Tournament there are specific rules that are modified from those used during regular-season play. To be aware and understand how to apply and explain the tournament versions of these common rules, please review these comparisons as stated in the current Little League Official Regulations, Playing Rules, and Polices.



# PLAYING RULES



## MANDATORY PLAY

### REGULAR SEASON:

Regulation IV(i): Every rostered player present at the start of the game will participate in each game for a minimum of six (6) defensive outs and bat at least one (1) time.

### TOURNAMENT RULE:

Tournament Rule 9: All Tournament Teams (Junior Division and below) must adopt a policy of a continuous batting order that will include all players on the team affidavit present at the start of the game, to appear in the batting order. Each player is required to bat in his/her respective spot in the batting order. A player may be entered and/or re-entered defensively in the game at any time, but is not required to play on defense.

**NOTE: Mandatory Play does not apply to the Senior Division.**



# PLAYING RULES



## COURTESY RUNNER

### REGULAR SEASON:

Rule 3.04: A player whose name is on the team's batting order may not become a substitute for another member of the team. Local league option: a local league may permit a "courtesy runner" for the catcher and/or pitcher of record when there are two (2) outs. Exception: If the continuous batting order is used, the "courtesy runner" may be in the team's batting order and must be the player in the batting order who made the last out. see 7.14(b).

### TOURNAMENT RULE:

Tournament Rule 3: A tournament team may permit a "courtesy runner" for the catcher and/or pitcher of record when there are two (2) outs. Utilizing continuous batting order, the courtesy runner may be in the team's batting order and must be the player in the batting order who made the last out.

**Senior Division:** Twice a game but not more than one time per inning, a team may utilize a player who is not in the batting order as a special pinch-runner for any offensive player. A player may only be removed for a special pinch-runner one time during a game. The player for whom the pinch-runner runs is not subject to removal from the lineup. If the pinch-runner remains in the game as a substitute defensive or offensive player, the player may not be used again as a pinch-runner while in the batting order. However, if removed for another substitute that player or any player not in the line-up, is again eligible to be used as a pinch-runner.



# PLAYING RULES



## MANAGERS AND COACHES IN THE DUGOUT

### REGULAR SEASON:

Rule 1.01: Little League Baseball and Softball in all divisions in a game between two teams of nine players each, under the direction of a manager not more than two rostered coaches, played on a regulation Little League field in accordance with these rules under the jurisdiction of one or more umpires.

### TOURNAMENT:

Allow teams to have up to three eligible coaches permitted in the dugout regardless of tournament team roster size. A maximum of three (3) adults who are named on the affidavit (or authorized replacements as noted on the affidavit) will be permitted to act as manager/coaches for that game. The named adults must be listed on the affidavit or must be authorized temporary replacements as noted on the affidavit.





# PLAYING RULES



## MANAGER/COACH WARMING UP PITCHER

### REGULAR SEASON:

**Rule 3.09:** Managers or coaches are permitted to warm up a pitcher at home plate or in the bullpen or elsewhere at any time including in-game warm-up, pre-game warm-up, and in other instances. They may also stand by to observe a pitcher during warm-up in the bullpen.

### TOURNAMENT RULE:

**Tournament Rule 3:** Pitching Rules (f): Managers or coaches are not permitted to warm up a pitcher at home plate or in the bullpen or elsewhere at anytime. They may stand by to observe a pitcher during warm-up in the bullpen.



# PLAYING RULES



## PROTESTING A GAME

### REGULAR SEASON:

**Rule 4.19(c)(1):** The protesting manager shall immediately, and before any succeeding pitch is thrown or play begins, notify the umpire that the game is being played under protest because of misinterpretation or violation of a playing rule.

**Rule 4.19(c)(2):** Following such notice, the umpire shall consult with the other umpire(s). If the umpire is convinced that the decision is in conflict with the rules, the umpire shall reverse the decision. If, after consultation, the umpire is convinced that the decision is not in conflict with the rules, said umpire shall announce that the game is being played under protest. Failure of the umpire to make such announcement shall not affect the validity of the protest.

**Rule 4.19(f):** A committee composed of the League's President, Player Agent, Umpire-in-Chief, and one or more other officers or directors who are not managers or umpires shall hear and resolve any such protest as above, including playing rules. If the protest is allowed, resume the game from the exact point when the infraction occurred.



# PLAYING RULES



## PROTESTING A GAME

### TOURNAMENT RULE:

**Rule 4.19 is replaced with the following for the tournament:**

**A1.** A formal (verbal) protest must be made to the Umpire-in-Chief at once by the manager or coach.

**A2.** The Umpire-in-Chief must immediately call a conference of all umpires working the game.

**A3.** If the problem cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the managers, the Umpire-in-Chief shall be required to consult with the Tournament Director or District Administrator.

**A4.** If the managers do not accept the decision of the Tournament Director, either manager may elect, without penalty to discontinue play until the matter is referred to Regional Headquarters. Either the Umpire-in-Chief, Tournament Director, or District Administrator will call Regional Headquarters at this time.

**A5.** If the managers do not accept the decision of the Regional Director (or his/her designated agent), either may insist that the matter be referred to the Little League International Tournament Committee in Williamsport. The decision of the Tournament Committee shall be final and binding.

**NOTE 2:** Umpires, Tournament Directors, and District Administrators **DO NOT** have the authority to declare a forfeiture under any circumstances.



# Tournament Protests



## Protests are considered under the following conditions

- Violation or interpretation of a playing rule
- Use of an ineligible pitcher
- Use of an ineligible player
- No protest shall be considered on a decision involving an umpire's judgment
- There is NO penalty for a manager to make a valid protest and request to have it heard through the chain of command
- Umpires, tournament directors, and district administrators do not have the authority to declare a forfeiture under any circumstances
- The decision of the Tournament Committee shall be final and binding



# Tournament Protests



## Violation or interpretation of a playing rule

- Managers start with the umpires on the field and can progress through the chain of command as they wish
- Umpires and tournament director may also escalate through the Chain of Command as they wish and need to
- Use of an ineligible pitcher
- Any protests or discovery of an ineligible pitcher must be reported to the Tournament Committee through the Region office through the Chain of Command
- Use of an ineligible player
- Any awareness of a claim by any means, of an ineligible player must be reported to the Tournament Committee through the Region office
  
- All officials, including all managers, coaches, scorekeepers, umpires, Tournament Directors, District Administrators, etc., should make every effort to prevent a situation that may result in the forfeiture of a game or suspension of tournament privileges. However, failure by any party to prevent such situations shall not affect the validity of a protest.



# SUSPENDED GAMES



**SUSPENDED GAMES:** Any game in which a winner cannot be determined in accordance with the playing rules shall be resumed from the exact point at which it was suspended regardless of the number of innings played. Incomplete (not regulation) or tie games are considered suspended games.

**NOTE:** A contest decided by forfeit does not constitute a “game” for the purposes of this rule, unless one complete inning was physically played before the game was forfeited. (Forfeits are only by decree of the Tournament Committee in Williamsport.)



# RUN RULE



**RUN RULE:** If at the end of three (3) innings (**Junior/ Senior League:** four innings), two and one-half innings (**Junior/Senior League:** three and one-half innings), if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of fifteen (15) runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede victory to the opponent. If at the end of a regulation game, one team has a lead of ten (10) runs or more the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent.

**NOTE 1:** If the visiting team has a lead of fifteen (15) or ten (10) or more runs respectively, the home team must bat in their half of the inning.

**NOTE 2:** A game determined by the 15-run rule, shall be considered a regulation game.

**NOTE 3:** There is no 8-run rule in Tournament Play, as outlined in Rule 4.10(e) for Regular Season only.



# REGULATION GAME



**REGULATION GAME:** Each tournament game must be played to the point of being an official game:

Regulation games are of four or more innings (five or more innings for **Junior/Senior League**) in which one team has scored more runs than the other (three and one-half (3 1/2) if the home team is ahead or four and one-half (4 1/2) if the home team is ahead in **Junior/Senior League**).

Regulation games (when a winner can be determined) terminated because of weather, darkness or curfew must be resumed if the visiting team ties the game or takes the lead in their half of the inning and the home team does not complete their at bat or take the lead in an incomplete inning. This does not apply to games suspended or delayed by weather that may still be resumed before darkness or curfew (as defined in Tournament Rules and Guidelines – Curfew) on the same day.

If two games are scheduled for the same site, no “time limit” may be imposed on the first game.





# TIE GAME



**TIE GAME:** When the completion of six innings [**Junior/Senior League:** seven innings] and the score is tied, the following tie-breaker will be played to determine a winning team:

- a. The seventh inning [**Junior/Senior League:** eighth inning] will be played as normal.
- b. Starting in the top of the eighth inning [**Junior/Senior League:** ninth inning], and each half inning thereafter, the offensive team shall begin its turn at bat with the player who is scheduled to be last in that respective half inning being placed on second base. **EXAMPLE:** If the number five batter is the lead-off batter, the number four batter in the batting order will be placed on second base. An eligible substitute or special pinch runner may be inserted for the runner.



# ALTERCATIONS



**ALTERCATIONS:** A manager, coach, or player shall not leave their position in the field or bench area during a fight or physical altercation; a manager or coach who attempts to prevent a fight or restore order, in the umpire's judgement, is not in violation of this rule.

**Penalty:** The umpire shall eject the offender(s) from the game immediately. Failure to comply with the ejection may result in the umpire suspending the game. The Tournament Director shall refer all incidents to the Tournament Committee who may impose additional penalties and/or actions towards the individuals and/or teams up to and including forfeiture of a game, further suspension and/or disqualification.



# EJECTIONS



A manager, coach, or player ejected from a game will be suspended for the next physically played game (See Rule 4.07). This includes pregame and postgame activities. Ejections shall be noted in the tournament team's eligibility affidavit in the Record of Ejections on page 4. Entry should include member's name and date ejected and be signed by the Tournament Director or District Administrator.

A manager, coach, or player suspended for any reason is not permitted to be at the game site and must not take any part in the game, nor have any communications whatsoever with any persons at the game site.

Violation may result, by action of the Tournament Committee, in further suspension; forfeiture of a game; and/or disqualification of the team, managers, or coaches from further tournament participation.



# Replacements



- Players, managers, and coaches listed on the tournament affidavit may be permanently replaced
- If a player, manager, or coach is replaced, that person may not be returned to the Tournament Affidavit
- Permanent replacements must be from the league's regular season teams and shall be recorded and approved by the District Administrator or Tournament Director in the space provided on the Eligibility Affidavit
- Any player, manager, or coach who has been replaced/removed shall be marked through with heavy black line
- Individuals suspended for any games may not be replaced



# Temporary Replacements



- If a manager or coach is unable to attend a game for a justifiable reason, a Tournament Director could approve a temporary replacement
- Managers or coaches suspended for any games **may not be** replaced for the team's next physically played game
- Temporary replacements do not have to come from regular season teams
- Temporary manager or coach replacements may only be used once, unless a Little League Volunteer Application is completed, and the league president or tournament director conducts a background check in accordance with Little League Regulations and any respective state laws
- Temporary manager or coach replacements must have completed the Diamond Leader training
- Temporary replacement of a manager or coach must be entered on the Eligibility Affidavit



# Starting Games and Curfew



- A game shall not be started unless the Tournament Director or assistant judges there is adequate time to complete the game before darkness or curfew
- No inning shall start after midnight prevailing time (8-10, 9-11, and LL)
- 12:30 a.m. for Intermediate (50-70) Division Baseball and Junior League Baseball/Softball
- 1:00 a.m. for Senior League Baseball/Softball
- NOTE: An inning starts the moment the third out is made completing the previous inning.
- Neither the Tournament Directors and officials nor tournament teams are permitted to circumvent the curfews established above by continuing, suspending and restarting, or starting a game after curfew has been reached and play is required to be terminated. If the curfew noted above occurs during a game suspended in accordance with Tournament Rule 11, that game must not be continued after the curfew. It must either be resumed on a subsequent day, or declared ended, as determined by rule.



# Inclement Weather



- All tournament games must be played as scheduled, and every attempt must be made to stay on schedule
- All attempts must be made for games suspended by weather
- Games that have become a regulation game and can't be resumed due to unplayable field conditions prior to curfew are over and may not be resumed to following day
- Same applies if darkness and no lights are available
- Games halted by light failure, a locally imposed curfew on the lights, sprinkler malfunction, or some other human-error condition, must be suspended and resumed the next available day
- Tournament directors reserve the right to move game sites or adjust game times to equate for inclement weather
- Schedules may not otherwise be altered



# Notable Rules and Differences



- An 11-inch softball is used in the 8-to 10-year-old Softball Division
- A 12-inch softball used in all other divisions
- Each player on tournament teams must wear a conventional uniform that includes the Little League patch
- Uniforms do not have to match
- The 8-10-year-old division does NOT use Minor League rules
- Little League (Major) Division rules apply when not addressed in the tournament playing rules
- 10-run and 15-run rules apply in all divisions of play





# Pre-Game Activities



- Arrive at the field at least one hour before game time
  - Check field conditions and other site activities for readiness
- Conduct the coin toss with Assistant Tournament Director/ Site Coordinator approx. 45 minutes prior to start of game
  - **Home team will occupy first base dugout--no exceptions**
  - **Visitor team will occupy third base dugout—no exceptions**
- Get ground rules from the host (should be written)
- Provide tournament affidavits (**ONLY**) to the Site Coordinator
  - Site Coordinator will verify completeness, accuracy, and signatures
  - Do not provide tournament team binders or Player Verification Forms
  - Keep sleeve of Medical Releases with you in the dugout



# Pre-Game Activities



- Confirm eligibility of pitchers
  - Opposing Manager does NOT get to review Affidavit or Pitch Count; however, it is good form for each manager to state which pitchers are ineligible and notify the Game UIC at the Plate Conference
- Provide the names, numbers, and positions of the players for the Site Coordinator to provide to announcer – best at coin toss time
- Occupy dugout when requested or when previous team has vacated
  - Parents may help with equipment but must leave the field immediately
- Place all equipment in front of dugout for safety inspection
- Thirty minutes before game time the home team will take the field for 10 minutes
- Twenty minutes before game time the visiting team will take the field for 10 minutes



# Pre-Game Activities



- Ten minutes before game time the announcer will:
  - Welcome the fans to the game
  - Introduce the home team players, coaches, manager and League representative(s)
  - Introduce the visiting team players, coaches, manager and League representative
  - Introduce the umpires
  - Introduce the Assistant Tournament Director on site
- Play the National Anthem or lead the Little League Pledge
- Turn the game over to the umpires
  - Players and coaches return to dugouts
  - UIC conducts Plate Conference



# After the Game



At the end of the game, make sure the pitchers' records are accurately recorded on the back of the affidavits (Managers must sign) and retrieve the affidavit. Review pitcher **eligibility, pitch counts (innings) and required days of rest with the Official Score Keeper and Site Coordinator.**

**Ensure you know when and where your next game will be and inform your teams.**

**Make sure the Site Coordinator has your contact information in case the schedule changes due to weather and/or field conditions.**



# Proper Attire

- ALL MANAGERS AND COACHES THAT PARTICIPATE IN ANY ALL STAR TOURNAMENTS, OR TOURNAMENTS THAT ARE LITTLE LEAGUE APPROVED INCLUDING BASEBALL & SOFTBALL MUST BE DRESSED APPROPRIATELY.
- **ACCEPTABLE WEAR:** TEAM HATS/VISORS, TEAM LOGO SHIRTS, COLLARED SHIRTS, SLACKS, SHORTS, SHOES, (SUCH AS TENNIS, SPORT, OR DRESS).
- **UNACCEPTABLE WEAR:** T-SHIRTS, CUTOFFS OF ANY TYPE, OPEN TOED SHOES, BARE FEET, OR ANY CLOTHING THAT HAS UNACCEPTABLE WORDING OR GRAPHICS NOT ASSOCIATED WITH LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL.
- **ANY DRESS:** THAT IS IN QUESTION, MUST BE APPROVED BY THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR PRIOR TO PARTICIPATING IN ANY TOURNAMENT.



# Proper Behavior



Manager responsible for behavior of coaches, players and fans

- Know how to properly question a call, make an appeal, and make a protest
- Site Coordinators and League Officials will be walking around and observing the spectators for problems. Managers may be asked to calm down their fans if they get unruly.
- No tobacco (including vaping), illegal drugs, or alcohol are permitted at tournament sites
- No inappropriate or foul language will be permitted from players, managers, coaches, or fans
- Ensure fans are aware of the Parent Code of Conduct and let them know they are expected to behave accordingly
  - Fans may be asked to leave the tournament site



# Spectator Guidance



- Game results will and updated and tournament brackets will be posted at the tournament site and will be available on the Virginia District 15 website, [www.VADistrict15.org](http://www.VADistrict15.org).
- There is no plan for games to be streamed via Game Changer, Facebook, or other internet media. If fans wish to stream a game, it must be viewed through a personal social media account for private use only and may not be on the open internet.
- Individuals wishing to record or live stream games for personal use are not permitted to affix any equipment to the playing facility, including but not limited to fencing, dugouts, stanchions, or light poles.
- No noise makers of any kind may be used during tournament games.
- No smoking or tobacco use is permitted at the field or on school grounds, which includes vaping and chewing. No alcohol or illicit drugs shall be brought to the tournament site.



# Team Managers and Coaches



- Have their teams at the field at least 1 hour before the first game they play and 45 minutes before each successive game time.
- Give the affidavit only, to the Site Coordinator/Assistant TD
- Give complete lineup all starters and subs to Assistant TD/Announcer
- Ensure all equipment meets Little League specifications – Bats and Helmets
- Have all players in appropriate uniform – LITTLE LEAGUE PATCHES
- Be dressed in appropriate attire
- Have medical release forms for each player
- Have a first aid kit
- **ENSURE THAT YOU AND YOUR TEAM CONDUCT YOURSELVES ACCORDING TO THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF SPORTSMANSHIP AND FAIR PLAY (See LL Pledges and Parent Code of Conduct)**





# Team Managers and Coaches



- Have all equipment out for inspection – only equipment being used
  - Approved Bats ONLY – Manager responsible – severe penalty for illegal bat
  - Catcher’s Helmet must have dangling throat protector
  - Equipment removed from the game will be returned when team exits tournament
- Managers and Coaches must have Little League Diamond Leader certification
- Managers, Coaches, and Players may not mingle w/ spectators (3.09)
- **Coaches (adults) may not warm up pitchers before or during game (3.09)**
- **Coaches (and spectators) will not “work” the umpires**
- Base Coaches respect the Coach’s Box
  - Only 1 offensive timeout per half inning



# Rules Summary



- All Tournament games conducted in accordance with 2024 Little League Softball® Tournament Rules and Guidelines
  - Continuous Batting Order (CBO) for Junior League and below
  - Uncaught 3<sup>rd</sup> Strike applies to 9-11 Softball and older divisions
  - Only rostered manager, coaches and players allowed in dugout or on the field – players (and coaches) must request permission from UIC to leave the dugout for any reason
  - Adults may not warm up pitchers at tournament site – any player may warm up pitcher w/ proper catcher’s helmet with throat guard
  - Catcher during Infield Practice must have helmet w/ throat guard (min)
  - Ensure Bats and Batting Helmets Meet LL Specifications (NO DENTS, CRACKS, or ALTERATIONS)
  - Base coaches do not take the field until after “throwdown”



# Safety Reminders



- Accident Reporting
  - Little League Accident Notification
    - When professional medical care required
    - Notify Tournament Director
    - Requires written clearance to return to play
- NO Jewelry (except Medical Alert)
- Heat Illness Prevention - Hydrate All Day (week) – encourage players to drink plenty of water – all day, every day
- Concussion Training – Managers and Coaches MUST have Concussion Awareness training and certification from NFHS
- **Lightning Policy – Wait 30 minutes - No Kidding – No Second Chances**
- Approved Bats – Bats must be a softball bat which meets Little League specifications and standards. No more than 33 inches (34 inches for Junior/Senior) in length and no more than 2 ¼ inches in diameter and if non-wood shall be printed with a BPF of 1.20.
- Additional information is available at [www.LittleLeague.org/BatInfo](http://www.LittleLeague.org/BatInfo)
- Equipment removed will be returned to team manager AFTER TEAM'S LAST GAME





# Questions??



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