

RULES

SECTION 2

ABF National Little League
Championships 2009

These Rules are to be read in conjunction with the Official Rules of Baseball

20. AGE

- (a) All players must not have turned 13 as at the 1st May of the year of the National Tournament
- (b) Only 11 and 12 year old players are eligible to participate

21. SQUAD SIZE

- (a) The squad must contain a minimum of 13 and a maximum of 14 players
- (b) A maximum of 3 coaches and 1 executive officer are allowed
- (c) A team scorer is optional

22. REGULATION GAME

- (a) The regulation game for the Little League National Championships consists of six (6) innings.
- (b) **It is a regulation game when:**
 - (i) The Home team scores the winning run in the 6th innings before the inning is completed. If a batter in the last half of the final inning of a game hits a home run over the home run fence or into the stand, all runners on base at the time of the hit as well as the batter, shall be entitled to score, but to legally score all bases must be touched in order by all runners. The final score of such a game shall be the total number of runs scored by each team.
 - (ii) The score is tied at the end of the 6th innings played, the game is continued until one team has scored more runs than the other in an equal number of innings, provided that if the Home team scores the winning run before the third man is out in any inning after the 6th the game shall terminate and be a regulation game.
 - (iii) Terminated by the Umpire on account of weather, darkness or any other cause which makes further play impossible provided 4 or more innings have been played, or the home team scores more runs in 4 innings, or before the completion of its 4th inning, than the Visiting team has scored 4 completed innings.
 - (iv) If the umpire terminates play after 4 completed innings, the score of such games shall be the score, at the end of the last completed inning. If, however, the Home team has scored more total runs than the Visiting

team and the game is terminated while the home team is at bat, the score of such game shall be the total runs scored by each team. Also when a game is terminated after 4 completed innings with the Visiting team at bat and the Home team ahead, the score shall be the total number of runs scored by each team at the time the game is terminated.

23. REGULATION TIED GAME

It is a regulation tied game when the umpire terminates play on account of weather, darkness or any other cause which makes further play impossible and:

- I. If at the end of 4 or more completed innings the score is tied.
- II. If the Home team shall score in its uncompleted 4th innings or any incomplete innings thereafter enough runs to equal the Visiting team's score.

24. SUSPENDED / RESCHEDULED GAME

- (a) It is a suspended game when the umpire terminates play on account of darkness, weather or any other cause which makes it impossible for further play in the game, and where less than 4 innings have been completed by each team.
- (b) When a number of games are suspended or not commenced during a Championship, then these games shall be **re-scheduled** so that each team play as near as possible an equal number of games. Where the suspended or not commenced games that are to be re-scheduled include key games between teams vying for the Championship, then these key games will be given precedence over other games. Games may be re-scheduled to be played on rest days if the program co-ordinator desires. The Tournament Director shall liaise with the Federation and Host State Officials in all re-scheduling of games. If re-scheduled, suspended games will be re-commenced at the point where the games were halted.
- (c) If game(s) are rain delayed or rained out and may be rescheduled on an alternate ground, the decision remains with the Tournament Director.

25. ABANDONED GAMES

If the Tournament Director cannot re-schedule a suspended game, then that game will be considered as **abandoned**, and competing teams will be awarded points as detailed in Rule 27.

Note: If a game is abandoned, pitch statistics and pitching rules will apply.

26. PLAYING CONDITIONS

- (a) **Weather Interference:**
 - (i) The number of games to be played may be reduced where weather or other conditions prevent the completion of the program within the time available.

(ii) For the first game of any day of the Championship the decision to delay, or abandon a game shall be made by the Tournament Co-ordinator in collaboration with ALL Officials in attendance.

(b) **Night Games:**
Night games may be played.

(c) **Order of Benches and Batting:**

The **First Named** team in the official schedule of games will be regarded as the **Home Team, Field First** and occupy the **Third Base** dug-out or bench.

(d) **Warm up before Games:**

Twenty (20) minutes before the scheduled starting time of a game, the visiting team will commence their entitled seven (7) minutes warm up on the playing diamond.

Twelve (12) minutes before the schedule starting time of the game the Home Team will commence their entitled seven minute warm up.

The remaining five minutes will allow the ground crew to finalise ground preparation.

The supervision of the warm up before the game will be the responsibility of the Tournament Director or a designated official.

If facilities at or near the playing venue are to be made available for pre-game batting practice then a standard schedule of batting practice and training will be drawn up by the Host State and distributed at the Managers' Meeting prior to the commencement of the series.

(e) **One Sided Games**

A game shall be completed when the team is leading by 10 or more runs after 4 innings. Providing the team that is ten runs behind completes its time at bat.

27. POINTSCORE

The Points allocated to Teams will be as follows:

(a) TWO points for a win. (b) ONE point for each team in Tied game.

NO points for either team in an abandoned game.

28. RANKING THE TEAMS

(a) **The Champion Team**

- (i) The Champion League team will be the team who wins the Championship Final.
- (ii) If the Championship Final fails to decide the Champion League team (e.g. game abandoned due to weather, light, etc) then the Champion will be decided by points. If both teams are tied on equal points then it will be decided by head to head.

(b) **Championships Affected by Abandoned Games**

Where less than the total number of games scheduled for a Championship is completed as the result of "Abandoned Games", the Winning League will be determined as follows:

- (i) For a League which completed all of its scheduled games, the number of points which it has actually scored will be divided by the number of points which it could have scored if it had won all games in which it competed and a percentage determined.
- (ii) For a League which completed less than the number of its scheduled games the number of points actually scored by the League will be divided by the number of points it could have scored had it won all games in which it competed and a percentage determined.
- (iii) In comparing the percentages calculated in accordance with (i) and (ii) above, the highest percentage is better than the lower percentage.
- (iv) When highest percentages are equal then the highest points actually scored will determine the higher place.
- (v) When the highest points scored are the same then a "Head-to-Head" method will apply.
- (vi) When the Head-to-Head result is equal the Head-to-Head method will be used against the same teams finishing above or below the teams involved with the Head-to-Head method.
- (vii) In the event two, three or more teams tie and the Head to Head method does not resolve order of ranking, then the following method is to apply:
 - The fewest runs allowed in the games played between the tied teams
 - The fewest runs allowed in the games played between teams above or below the tied teams.

29. TIME SAVING RULES

(a) **Policy and Intent**

The ABF Board have resolved to speed-up the play of ABF games. The intent of these rules is to encourage umpires, coaches and players to limit time-wasting and to ensure ABF games progress quickly and smoothly.

(b) **Umpires Responsible for Enforcement**

Umpires are responsible for enforcement of the ABF time saving rules and should wear a wrist-watch for this purpose. All violations of this Section should be reported to the tournament co-ordinator and referenced in the Umpires' Written Report to the ABF.

(c) **Pre-game Practice**

In no event should pre-game practice interfere with or delay the scheduled start of the game. The teams should comply with the Rules set forth herein regarding such matters.

(d) **20 Second Pitch Rule**

- (i) The 20 second rule for the pitcher shall apply whenever there are no runners on base.
- (ii) Under the 20 second Pitch Rule, the pitcher must begin his pitching motion within 20 seconds of receiving the ball from the catcher, umpire or other player. This requirement shall not apply if the batter is granted time and leaves the batter's box.
- (iii) If the pitcher violates the 20-second Pitch Rule, the umpire shall issue warning to the team following the pitch. Following the warning each violation of the Rule shall result in a ball being called against the team in violation. If the pitch is thrown before the violation is called, the pitch shall be deemed a ball, regardless of its location. If, in the Umpire's opinion, the pitcher is intentionally violating the Rule, he may eject the offending pitcher and/or Manager from the game.

(e) **Hitter to Remain in Batter's Box**

- (i) The hitter shall be required to remain in the batter's box unless he makes a request for "time" and the umpire feels that the request is reasonable. Only then shall the umpire grant time out.
- (ii) If no runners are on base, the batter should not be granted time and permitted to leave the batter's box unless, in the opinion of the umpire, unusual circumstances exist which make the request a reasonable one.

(f) **Limits on Offensive Meetings**

Teams are allowed a maximum of three (3) "offensive meetings" per game. An offensive meeting shall be charged any time a coach delays the game for any length of time to talk with an offensive player, whether it be the hitter, a base-runner or an on-deck batter going to the plate, or to another coach. If the game goes into extra innings, one (1) additional "offensive meeting" shall be permitted for each three (3) extra innings.

(g) **Visits to the Mound**

- (i) A manager or coach may come out twice in one inning to visit with the pitcher, but the third time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher.
- (ii) A manager or coach may come out three times in one game to visit with the pitcher, but the fourth time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher.
- (iii) The manager or coach is prohibited from making a third visit while the same batter is at bat.
- (iv) A manager or coach may confer with **any other player(s)**, including the catcher, during the visit with the pitcher. A manager or coach who is granted a time out to talk to any defensive player will be charged with a visit to the pitcher.

30. MANDATORY PLAY

Every player on a team roster shall participate in EACH game for a minimum of three (3) consecutive defensive outs and bat at least one (1) time.

- (a) Managers are responsible for fulfilling the mandatory play requirements.
- (b) There is no exception to this rule unless the game is shortened for any reason. NOTE: A game is not considered shortened if the home team does not complete the offensive half of the sixth inning (or any extra inning) due to winning the game.
- (c) Failure to meet the mandatory play requirements in this rule is a basis for protest. If one or more players on a roster do not meet this requirement, and if protested before the umpires leave the playing field, it shall result (by action of the Tournament Committee) in the suspension of the team's manager for the next two (2) scheduled tournament games, even if those games are played at the next tournament level. Additional penalties (up to and including forfeiture of a game and/or disqualification of the team, managers or coaches from further tournament participation) may be imposed if, in the opinion of the Tournament Committee:
 - 1. a manager or coach takes any action that results in making a travesty of the game, causing players to intentionally perform poorly for the purpose of extending or shortening a game, or;

2. a team fails to meet the requirements of this rule more than once during the International Tournament, which begins with District play and ends at the World Series, or;
3. a manager wilfully and knowingly disregards the requirements of this rule.

A manager or coach suspended for any reason is not permitted to be at the game site and must not take 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.

- (d) For the purposes of this rule, “three (3) consecutive defensive outs” is defined as: A player enters the field in one of the nine defensive positions when his/her team is on defense and occupies such position while three consecutive outs are made; “bat at least one (1) time” is defined as: A player enters the batters box with no count and completes that at bat by being put out or by reaching base safely.
- (e) When a player is injured during a tournament and not able to participate for a given period of time the team is to provide a medical certificate/statement from a doctor or physiotherapist to the Tournament Director that details the period of time that the player is unable to participate. Upon reactivation the player the Mandatory Play rule will once again come into effect.
- (f) All substitutions must be made via the Plate Umpire. After receiving the substitution/s the umpire will then signal the scorers to indicate the substitutions. Scorers are to be alert for changes so as to avoid unnecessary delays. It is recommended that there be somebody situated adjacent to the scorers to alert them when changes are being made.
- (g) Teams that do not meet participation requirements will not be able to participate in the Championship Final.

31. SUBSTITUTION/RE ENTRY

- (a) If illness, injury or the ejection of a player prevents a team from fielding 9 players, a player previously used in the line up may be inserted but only if there are no eligible substitutes available. The opposing team Manager shall select the player to re enter the line up. A player ejected from the game is not eligible for re entry.
- (b) Any player who has been removed for a substitute may re enter the game in the SAME position in the batting order.
- (c) A substitute entering the game for the first time may not be removed prior to the completion of his/her mandatory play requirements

32. DROPPED 3RD STRIKE

Batter is out on 3rd strike whether caught by catcher or not

33. PITCHERS

- (a) A pitcher's game contribution will be classified as:

Assignment	Little League
MAJOR	46 pitches and not to exceed 85 pitches
SUBSTANTIAL	21 - 45 pitches
MINOR	20 or less

- (i) It will be the responsibility of the official scorer to notify the Chief Umpire and each team when a pitcher is within 10 pitches of the maximum allowable number.
- (ii) A pitcher reaching his maximum number of pitches for a major assignment is to be removed from the mound once he has completed the batter.
- (iii) A "no pitch", eg, batter steps out of the batter's box and the pitcher delivers the pitch, shall not be included in the pitch count.
- (iv) A pitch called illegal by an umpire will be counted in the pitch count
- (b) Any player pitching a major assignment will be required to complete two calendar days rest from pitching and catching.
- (c) For a substantial part played, 1 calendar days rest from pitching is required.
- (d) A player may not pitch in more than one game in a day.
- (e) If any pitcher delivers one pitch in an inning, he shall be charged for one (1) assignment.
- (f) The word assignment means that each game in which a player pitches is considered one assignment.
- (g) A player once removed as a pitcher may not pitch again in the same game.
- (h) The scorers shall indicate in the score-book for each pitcher the game contribution and when the pitcher may next play.

- (i) **A pitcher who delivers one or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day.**
- (j) The Chief Umpire will be supplied, 30 minutes prior to the start of the game, a list of players who are ineligible to pitch. The Tournament Director will be responsible for the delivery of this information to the Chief Umpire and the two Managers/Head Coaches as soon as possible prior to the game.
- (k) The Umpire has the authority to police the pitching rule.
- (l) Pitchers in the Little League National Championship may only throw fast balls or straight change ups. Knuckle balls, split fingers, fork balls and curve balls and any other variations are not permitted.

If any other pitch is thrown, the Plate Umpire will call "Illegal Pitch". The illegal pitch call may also be made by a field umpire. If the ball is not batted then the pitch shall be called a "Ball". If the pitch is hit by a batter, then normal rules of Baseball will apply. Where the ball is batted and an out is made, or the batter strikes out, then the batter runner is not out and the illegal pitch rule and penalty will apply. 8.01(d)

The pitched ball will count towards the pitcher's count.

This rule must be addressed in full with umpires prior to the championships. It must also be stressed at the managers meeting and the responsibility of the respective coaches to ensure that the rule is adhered to. In doing this the purpose of the rule must be stressed.

This rule is a mandatory Australian rule and will be in effect for all Australian Little League teams at all times. This includes all International Tournaments (Asia-Pacific and World Series included).

It is important to note that it is the responsibility of the Head Coach to ensure that their team abides by these rules.

32. BASEBALLS

Baseballs for the National Little League Championship will be provided by the Australian Baseball Federation

33. EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS

The following specific instructions cover certain items of equipment and uniforms:

- (a) **Footwear:**
 - (i) In Little League Championships, only shoes with flexible, soft stops or dimple type soles can be worn.

(b) **Protective Helmets**

- (i) Each team must provide an adequate number of protective helmets as approved by the ABF. Double eared helmets will be mandatory in all Championships for the hitter, the hitter on deck, the base runners and the bat boy.
- (i) All catchers are required to wear protective head gear and shall wear a “dangling” type protective throat guard.

(c) **Face Masks**

All catchers must wear a mask, “dangling” type throat protector and a catcher’s helmet during infield/outfield practice, pitcher warm-up and games (this includes catchers helmets with built in face mask). Any player or coach warming up a pitcher shall wear a face mask and a helmet no matter whether in the bull pen or on the playing field.

(d) **Baseball Caps**

Baseball caps are regarded as part of the playing uniform and must be worn by all coaches and players, including catchers, at all times during a game unless where substituted by a protective helmet.

(e) **Warm-up Jackets**

When his team is on offence, a pitcher or a relieved pitcher may wear a team warm-up jacket once he reaches base.

(f) **Bases**

It is important to note that for the National Championship all bases must be disengage-able i.e. they disengage their anchor upon collision.

(g) **Baseball Bats**

The bat shall not be more than thirty-three (33) inches in length nor more than two and one-quarter (2¹/₄) in diameter. It shall be printed with a BPF (bat performance factor) of 1.15 or less.

(h) **On deck batters are not allowed**

(i) **Uniforms**

The Rules of Baseball in relation to uniforms shall apply to all Championships.

(i) All players on a team shall wear numbered uniforms identical in colour, trim and style.

(ii) The Official Little League shoulder patch must be affixed to the upper left sleeve of the uniform shirt. Patches are worn 3” below the left shoulder

seam on raglan sleeve; 1" below seam on set-in sleeves; over left breast on sleeveless style.

(iv) Coaches and managers must not wear conventional baseball uniforms or shoes with metal spikes but may wear cap, slacks, shorts and shirt. On-field coaches will remain in the coaches' boxes at all times and will not talk to members of the opposing team.

(j) Line Up Cards

All players eligible to play in a game must be listed on the line up card handed to the Plate Umpire at the home plate meeting. However in the event of an oversight in which an eligible player is omitted from the original line up card will not prevent that player from entering the game.

34. TROPHIES

(a) Winning League:

No trophies other than as specified in rule 2 of these Rules and Procedures will be made available or awarded to teams or individuals winning the Championship without prior reference to the ABF and approved by the Federation.

It will be the responsibility of the District winning the Championship to have the team trophy suitably engraved, and to be responsible for the proper care of the trophy during the period until the next Championship. It must also ensure that the trophy is available in the District conducting the next Championship for further presentation. Any damage or need for maintenance of a trophy should be reported to the Federation.

(b) Medallions for Winning League:

All players, coaches, assistant coaches, managers, scorers and bat boys are to receive a suitable medallion, such medallions to be supplied by the Federation. Umpires from the winning League do not receive medallions.

(c) Individual:

There will be no individual trophies presented.

35. REPORTED PLAYERS

(a) Should any player, non-playing coach or manager be ordered from the game by an umpire for any misdemeanour, the person concerned will appear before the tribunal of the Host District prior to such person's next game in the Championship. Any tribunal hearing during a Championship must be finalised prior to the next game in which the involved parties are engaged.

(b) The Tribunal will comprise the Tournament Director, at least one ALL official (or his/her appointed representative) along with one member appointed by the Host District. It will not include any members of a competing teams' staff or delegation.

- (c) The Tribunal of the Host District is authorised to impose whatever penalty is deemed necessary.

36. SLIDE RULE

A runner is out when the runner does not slide or attempt to get around a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to make the tag.

37. Base Runner Leaving the Base Early

When a pitcher is in contact with the pitcher's plate and in possession of the ball and the catcher is in the catcher's box ready to receive delivery of the ball, base runners shall not leave their bases until the ball has been delivered and has reached the batter.

The violation by one base runner shall affect all other base runners

- a) When a base runner leaves the base before the pitched ball has reached the batter and the batter does not hit the ball, the runner is permitted to continue. If a play is made on the runner and the runner is out, the out stands. If said runner reaches safely the base to which the runner is advancing, that runner must be returned to the base occupied before the pitch was made, and no out results;
- b) When a base runner leaves the base before the pitched ball has reached the batter and the batter hits the ball, the base runner or runners are permitted to continue. If a play is made and the runner or runners are put out, the out or outs will stand. If not put out, the runner or runners must return to the original base or bases or to the unoccupied base nearest the one that was left; in no event shall the batter advance beyond first base on a single or error, second base on a double or third base on a triple. The umpire-in-chief shall determine the base value of the hit ball.
- c) When any base runner leaves the base before the pitched ball has reached the batter and the batter bunts or hits a ball within the infield, no run shall be allowed to score. If three runners were on the bases and the batter reaches first base safely, each runner shall advance to the base beyond the one they occupied at the start of the play except the runner who occupied third base, that runner shall be removed from the base without a run being scored.

Note: See exceptions following this rule. **Exception:** If at the conclusion of the play there is an open base, paragraphs (a) and (b) will apply.

Examples:

- (i) Runner on first leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely, runner goes to second.
- (ii) Runner on second leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely, runner returns to second.
- (iii) Runner on third leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely, runner returns to third.
- (iv) Runner on first leaves too soon, batter hits clean double, runner goes to third only.
- (v) Runner on second leaves too soon, batter hits clean double, runner goes to third only.
- (vi) Runner on third leaves too soon, batter hits clean double, runner returns to third.

- (vii) All runners on base will be allowed to score when the batter hits a clean triple or home run, regardless of whether any runner left too soon.
- (viii) Runners on first and second, either leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely, runners go to second and third.
- (ix) Runners on first and second, either leaves too soon, batter hits clean double, runner on first goes to third, runner on second scores.
- (x) Runners on first and third, either leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely, runner on first goes to second, runner on third remains there.
- (xi) Runners on first and third, either leaves too soon, batter hits a clean double, runner on first goes to third, runner on third scores.
- (xii) Runners on second and third, either leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely, neither runner can advance.
- (xiii) Runners on second and third, either leaves too soon, batter hits a clean double, runner on third scores, runner on second goes to third.
- (xiv) Runners on first, second and third, any runner leaves too soon, batter hits clean double, runners on second, third score, runner on first goes to third.
- (xv) Bases full, any runner leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely on any ball bunted, or hit within the infield, all runners advance one base except runner advancing from third. Runner advancing from third is removed, no run is scored and no out charged. If on the play, a putout at any base results in an open base, runner who occupied third base returns to third base.
- (xvi) Bases full, any runner leaves too soon, batter received a base on balls or are hit by a pitch each runner will advance one base and a run will score.

i. **Note:** When an umpire detects a base runner leaving the base too soon, that umpire shall drop a signal flag or handkerchief or wave his hat immediately to indicate the violations. Umpires are encouraged to position themselves such that they can see the hitter and base runner in the same view.

ii. **Note:** For purpose of these examples, it is assumed that the batter-runner remains at the base last acquired safely.

iii. **Note:** The intent and the enforcement of the rule is so that the team on offense will gain no advantage from having left the base early. It is practical that the Base Umpire have the primary responsibility for observing a runner leaving early. To increase his field of view, the Base Umpire shall position himself beyond the infield and on the right field side of the diamond so that all base runners are in his field of view as the pitched ball reaches the

38. PENALTIES FOR INFRINGEMENT OF RULES

A field rule violation is defined as the breaking of any rule in a game. The penalty for a breach of ABF playing rules, unless otherwise specified in the ABF Operations Manual for National Youth Championships, may be a fine of up to a maximum of \$500.

- The penalty for breach(es) of ABF Procedural Regulations (pre/post program) will be a fine(s) up to a maximum of \$500 for any one offence.
- The penalty for breaches of Code of Conduct agreements shall be \$500 for any one offence and where relevant ejection from the game.

When an offending team in breach of the pitching or participation rules has won the game, then that team loses the game on a forfeiture (i.e. the non-offending team will be awarded the game on a 9 - 0 or 7 - 0 forfeiture basis and will be awarded the points). If the offending team loses the game, the violation shall be reported to the TMC for consideration of imposition of penalty.

If there are breaches of the Rules where there are no penalties, then the ABF Championship Representative is to rule on the matter in the best interests of the game.

39 USE OF LITTLE LEAGUE NAME AND EMBLEM

Use of the Official Emblem “LL”, “LLB”, and/or words “Little League”, “Little League Baseball”, “Senior League”, “Big League”, “Senior League Baseball”, “Big League Baseball”, “Challenger Division”, etc (registered under Federal Certificate in US Patent Office), is granted to chartered leagues and cannot be extended by Local Leagues to any other organization for any purpose whatsoever. These marks are protected both by a special act of Congress and registrations with the United States Patent and Trade Mark Office. All rights in and to any and all marks of Little League Baseball, Incorporated are reserved.