



## **Majors Handbook Spring 2023**

### **Introduction:**

Majors uses full Little League (LL) rules with kid-pitching, stealing, passed balls, dropped third strikes etc. In-town and out-of-town games. Players for post-season All-Star LL Tournament team selected from this division.

### **Division objectives and values:**

1. At the end of the season, we hope that all of our players will want to play next year and encourage friends to play.
2. We will meet every player where they are and support them in their own development, aiming to have them end the season as better players than when they started
3. We will foster team spirit in which players support their teammates and respect their opponents
4. Baseball is a game of movement. Every player should be moving on every play. On every ball put in play, fielders should either 'go to the ball' or 'go to a base' or back up a base.
5. Safety is important to us. There is no 'on deck' swinging of bats in this division and only players actively hitting balls should be holding bats. Bats must never be thrown. All batters and base runners must wear helmets.
6. We all help clean up and pitch in at the end of practice/games, especially attending to raking and dragging of the entire infield dirt after every practice session.

### **Typical division schedule:**

Teams in this division will have three sessions every week. Each team will have at least 12 games scheduled. Rainouts must be made up as eligibility for the post-season All-Star team depends on players having participated in 12 games. Game days will be variable among T Th and Su depending on scheduling needs. Games may be played on other days as needed and rainout makeups may occur on any day of the week.

### **LL Rules:**

1. Our games follow the full set of Little League rules. The rules are lengthy and available in an app. This section presents some 'highlights'

2. Baserunning
  - a. Stealing is allowed, as is advancing on passed balls and wild pitches. Players may attempt to take second (and further bases) after a walk. Leading is not allowed. Baserunners must maintain contact with their starting base until the ball reaches the batter.
3. Head first slides are prohibited except when 'retreating' to a base. There is no 'must-slide' rule, but runners must slide or otherwise avoid contact with a fielder when that fielder has the ball and is attempting to tag the baserunner.
4. Any player playing catcher must wear a protective cup. It is up to coaches to enforce this rule.
5. Pitch counts
  - a. LL has strict pitch counts

Pitches	Days rest
66+	4
51-65	3
36-50	2
21-35	1
1-20	0

Players aged 11-12 may not throw more than 85 pitches on a single day.  
 Players aged 10 may not throw more than 75 pitches in a single day

Any player who has caught four or more innings may not subsequently pitch on that day.

If a pitcher throws 40 pitches during a game they may not subsequently play catcher on that day.

There are many subtleties and complexities to these rules. Please read the rules in full.

#### House Rules:

1. Each player must play an infield position for at least one inning in each game.
2. An inning ends after any play where the fifth run of the inning scores. Additional runs scored on the same play count.
3. Home team provides two game balls for each game
4. The head coach of the 'home' team is responsible for preparing the field for play
  - a. Rake and drag infield, baseline and home plate dirt
  - b. Place chalk lines on infield dirt for 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> foul lines / base lines
  - c. Place chalk lines for batter's boxes

- d. Ensure dugouts are clean and free of litter
5. When hosting an out-of-town team the head coach of the Amherst teams is responsible for the following end-of-game tasks. When two Amherst teams play the responsibility falls to the head coach of the 'visiting' team.
  - a. Rake and drag all infield, base line and home plate dirt
  - b. Replace home and mound tarps
  - c. Ensure dugouts are free of litter.

### **Team administrative responsibilities:**

1. Publicity
  - a. Players should be told to wear their game jerseys to school on game days
  - b. After each game a short game report should be sent to Kyle Grabowski ([sports@gazettenet.com](mailto:sports@gazettenet.com)) at the Gazette sports desk for consideration for publication. When two Amherst teams play each other the 'home' team should report the result.
2. Communication
  - a. Parents like and deserve good communication. Communicate frequently and clearly with your team
  - b. Communicate with opposing coaches in advance of games to establish any ground rules, order of taking the field for pregame, discuss weather, etc.
3. Scorekeeping: An official scorebook must be kept for every game.
  - a. There are no errors in our scorekeeping. Any ball put in play on which the batter reaches first safely is a 'hit'.
  - b. The following statistics must be kept for all players through the course of the season. These are used to aid in determining All-Star team makeup and season-end awards
    - i. Batters:
      1. Batting average (including ABs when the batter reaches on what might be considered an error. See note a. above.)
      2. On base percentage
    - ii. Pitchers
      1. Innings pitched
      2. Runs allowed per 9 innings (including what might be considered 'unearned' runs. See note a. above)
      3. Total walks and walks per 9 innings
      4. Total strikeouts and strikeouts per 9 innings.

**LL Tournament Team:**

Following the conclusion of the regular season, Amherst Baseball selects an All-Star team to participate in the annual Little League tournament. This tournament is 'road to Williamsport' and the LL World Series. The first stage of the tournament is the Massachusetts District 2 tournament which usually consists of about 6 or 7 round-robin games followed by a 4-team single elimination bracket.

Participating in this tournament is an important part of being a Little League town and being selected for the team is an honor and privilege.

Open tryouts are held for the team at some point during the first two weeks of June. Any player who was on a majors roster may tryout. Team selection is made by a committee consisting of the head coach of the tournament team, all majors division head coaches, the president of Amherst Baseball and others selected by the President.

Participation on the All-Star team is a significant commitment, requiring 5-6 practices/games per week from the end of the regular season through at least the middle of July (the typical end of the District 2 tournament).

**Equipment:**

Each team receives the following

1. 24 practice balls
2. 12 game balls
3. 5 helmets
4. 2 bats
5. 1 set catcher's equipment
6. 1 set game jerseys
7. First aid kit and ice packs

**50-70 games:**

We try to schedule one or two 50-70 games against Hadley each year. The purpose of these games is to give players an opportunity to experience a larger field and some of the rules variations, specifically related to leading, stealing and pickoffs.

The team for the 50-70 games will be made up of the 12 year olds in the league who wish to play. If there is insufficient interest from the 12 year olds, younger players in the league may be invited to play at the discretion of the coaches.

**Fields:**

The majors division will use the Mill River fields.

The Town of Amherst provides only minimal field maintenance for youth baseball. In return, by longstanding arrangement, we do not pay fees to the town for field usage. It is the responsibility of every player and coach to maintain our fields. See 'House Rules' for details.

**Rainouts and makeups:**

Games must be rescheduled. Coaches should arrange rescheduling with opposing coaches.