



Hillsborough Little League

Division AAA Managers Meeting

January 19, 2013



AAA Division: Overall Goals and Coaching Objectives

Goals

- AAA is an instructional league
- Introduction to “real” baseball with competition, wins, losses, scores, playoffs
- Extend foundational skills – pitch, hit, field, throw, catch & run
- Extend situational knowledge
- Help develop a love for the game

Coaching Objectives

- Make AAA a positive experience for every kid on your team
- Make it fun
- Teach good sportsmanship
- Prepare kids for higher levels
- Do not win at all costs



Expectations of Managers and Coaches

- Be a role model for our kids
- It's a game!
- They're kids!
- Show respect for the players, opponents, umpires and parents
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship
- Coach all levels of players
- Practice self-control
 - Take deep breaths
 - Remind yourself where you are and what's at stake
- Safety first



High Level Overview of AAA

- 100% kid pitch
- All players in the game for 3 innings
- Youth umpires run the game
- First 4 games are pre-season games
- Regular season record seeds for the playoffs
- Playoffs are round robin, single elimination
- 2013 National Little League rules are in effect except for the following local rules



Teams

- 8 Division AAA teams for 2013
- American League names
- 12 players per team
- Mostly 9 year olds, some 8's, some 10's
- One manager and one coach only until draft



Draft Night Jan 31

- The draft and draft documents are strictly confidential
- One manager and one coach per team come to draft night.
 - If you want someone specific as your 3rd coach you must draft their child.
- Draft order pulled from a hat.
- Managers and coaches kids are slotted by a HLL board committee.
- Serpentine draft.
- Draft off of the available player list only.
- Manager/coach's kid name in a slot equals a skipped round for their team.
- Once the draft is complete trades are allowed, subject to a time limit.
- All trades must be announced and recorded on draft night. No exceptions.
- The team you walk out the door with on draft night is your team for the season.
- When batting cage time becomes available we will hold a draft for those slots



Game Day Logistics

- Home team is responsible for prepping the field before the game – raking, dragging, watering, setting up the scoreboard, and putting down the bases if necessary.
- Home team is responsible for dragging the infield after the game.
- Home team uses the designated bench, visiting team uses the other one.
- Home team keeps the official book.
 - It's recommended for the bookkeeper on both sides to keep score and track of the pitch counts.
 - The bookkeepers should compare notes and resolve inconsistencies after every inning.
- Home team provides game balls.



Pre-Game Warm-Ups

- 10 minute on-field warm-ups for both teams
- Visiting team warms-up on field for :30-:20 before the game.
- Home team warms-up on field :20-:10 before the game.
- Games begin promptly at the set time.
- Failure to warm-up on field at the designated time results in a forfeit of the warm-up.



Start of Play

- Must have at least 8 players to start a game.
 - Less than 8 is an automatic forfeit.
 - If playing with 8 and someone has to leave, then the game is forfeited.
 - Re-scheduling of the game may be available, depending on the situation. Contact the Division Director and Player Agent if this happens.
 - Manager must inform the other team and the umpire prior to a player's departure
- Maximum of one manager and two coaches permitted on the field or in the dugout during games.
 - Two of these 3 adults can be at the bases but at least one adult must be in the dugout during offensive play
- Both managers need to confirm the start time with the umpire.
 - Log the start time into the scorebook.
 - Game begins at first pitch.
- 6 inning games in AAA.



Playing Time Rules

- All players **MUST** play for at least 3 innings per game, i.e. for 9 defensive outs.
 - **Don't sit a child for the first 3 innings, many games don't go to 6**
 - **Don't sit a child for 3 innings in a row**
 - Players who are not able to complete 9 defensive out in a game must start in the very next game and play at least 3 consecutive innings in that game.
 - The only exception to this rule is for on-going behavioral problems. Talk to the Player Agent and Division Director if this situation arises.
- Guide for player substitutions: playing time has to add up to 54 man innings.
 - 12 players – 6 play 5 innings, 6 play 4 innings
 - 11 players – 10 play 5 innings, 1 plays 4 innings
 - 10 players – 6 play 5 innings, 4 play 6 innings
 - It's better to have a child play their 4th inning before another child plays in their 5th inning
- Remember: **AAA** is an instructional league – our focus should be on developing all of the kids not just the best or favorite players.



Run Limits

- 5 run limit per inning except in the last inning.
 - The half inning is over immediately after the 5th run crosses the plate
- Mercy rule: game is over if a team is behind:
 - 20 or more runs after 4 innings
 - 10 or more runs after 5 innings
- Ties are permitted in the regular season.
 - No ties in the tournament



End of Game Rules

- No new inning after 1:59 of play, 1:45 on weeknights where back-to-back games have been scheduled
 - A new inning begins at the last out of the preceding inning, not when the teams take the field.
 - Home plate umpire will call last inning, but if not, please remind her/him.
 - If last inning is not called and it's over 2 hours, the game is over. You can't start another inning.
- Umpire needs to sign the home team book after the game.
- Home team required to email, call or text the AAA Division Director with the score of the game and the pitch counts.



Pitching Rules

- AAA is 100% kid pitch.
- All pitchers must wear head savers.
- Any player on the team may pitch.
 - Encourage all kids to give pitching a try
- There is no limit to the number of pitchers a team may use in a game.
- 41' pitching distance
 - Measured from the back of home plate to the back of the pitching rubber on the raised mound.
 - You can also measure 34 inches from the back of the permanent rubber at Crocker to the back of the rubber on the raised mound.
 - Crocker uses a raised portable mound.
- Managers may visit the mound as often as needed.
 - Frequent trips are discouraged because they slow the game down.
 - Umpires have discretion.
 - The catcher and other players may join the manager on the mound.
- Any pitcher who hits 3 batters in a game must be removed from the mound for the rest of the game.



Pitch Counts

- Pitch count maximum per day varies by age:
 - 7-8 years old: 50 pitches per day
 - 9-10 years old: 75 pitches per day
 - 11-12 years old: 85 pitches per day
- If a pitcher reaches their pitch limit while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue until one of the following occurs
 - The batter reaches base
 - The batter is out
 - The 3rd out is made to complete the inning
- Players cannot return to pitch in the same game.
 - Pitchers who have pitched 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play catcher for the remainder of the day.
 - Pitchers who've reached their limit can assume another defensive position
- 6 warm-up tosses for new pitchers, 4 warm-up tosses for returning pitchers
 - These don't count toward the daily pitch count.



Counting Pitches and Resting

- Scorekeeper or someone else must serve as the official pitch count recorder.
- The recorder must product the pitch count when requested by either manager or the umpire.
 - But the manager is responsible for knowing when the pitcher must be removed.
- The recorder must inform the main umpire when a pitcher has reached their limit.
 - Umpire will tell the manager the pitcher is at the limit.
 - Failure to act by the recorder or the umpire does not relieve the manager of the responsibility to remove the pitcher when the limit is met.
- National Little League rest requirements
 - 51-65 pitcher in a day: three calendar days of rest is mandatory
 - 36-50 pitches in a day: two calendar days of rest is mandatory
 - 21-35 pitches in a day: one calendar day of rest is mandatory
 - 1-20 pitches in a day: no rest required



Fielding Rules

Obstruction

- A fielder cannot block the plate or the base without the ball.
- If this happens, the runner is safe.

Interference

- If the fielder has the ball, the runner must slide or go around the fielder,
- Runner cannot crash into the fielder in an effort to dislodge the ball.
- On close plays, runners should slide.

Keep the game going

- No throwing around the horn.



Batting Rules

- Everyone child must wear a batting helmet while on offense in the field.
- Continuous batting order only – players bat 1 through 12 whether or not they are playing in the field
- No on-deck circle
- Practice swings allowed only at home plate
- Bunting --- need to decide.



Base Running Rules

- Bases are 45' apart (I think)
- No lead offs
- No stealing home on a wild pitch, pass ball, overthrow back to the pitcher, etc.
 - Need to decide about stealing home in 1st and 3rd situations.
- Runner cannot leave the bag in an attempt to steal 2nd or 3rd until the catcher is in full possession of the ball.
 - More like a tag-up than a steal.
 - Runners who violate this must go back to their original base.
 - Cannot steal home if the catcher overthrows to 3rd on a steal attempt.
 - Want to encourage catchers to attempt to throw out runners
 - Want to encourage teams to bat runs in.
- Sliding is allowed – feet first only.
- Runners may not advance if a fielder or the catcher overthrows to the pitcher after a play has ended, even if the ball just merely gets away from the pitcher.
- If a fielder has the ball and is in the process of throwing the ball back to the pitcher, the runner cannot advance and must be sent back if past the base.



Umpire Etiquette

- The AAA division uses youth umpires.
- Their judgment calls cannot be argued or challenged under any circumstances
 - They're learning, just like the rest of the kids on the field.
 - They will make wrong calls
 - They will make wrong calls in critical situations
 - “Part of the fabric of the league”
- Umpire no-show: managers need to agree on a coach or parent to fill the role
- Managers may ask for permission to approach the umpire about the interpretation of a rule.
 - If permission is granted, the manager must present the page and paragraph of the rule in the 2013 National Little League Official Rulebook
 - The manager must discuss only their views about the specific rule.
 - Once play has resumed, no further challenges to that specific play may occur.
 - The request must be timely so as to avoid lengthy game delays, esp if the delay is to locate the book or the rule in it.



Field Etiquette

- No players in the stands during games.
- No siblings or non-coaching adults allowed in or around the dugout during games.
- Players may not swear or throw their hats, bats or helmets
 - Violations result in a one game suspension
- The same goes for managers and coaches.
- No heckling, taunting or teasing the opposing team.
 - This applies to everyone: players, coaches, parents and spectators
- No talking to the batter during the pitch
- Umpires may stop the game and ask the managers and coaches to help control a parent or spectator who is acting out.
- Umpire's decision to remove someone from a game is final.
- National Little League rules say that anyone ejected from a game is suspended for the next game also.
- No one is allowed to watch the game from behind the backstop or within 10 feet on either side.



Make Ups and Call Ups

- Regular season games will be made up only if they impact the standings
- If a game is called for daylight or weather, the game will continue the following day, one hour prior to the first game.
- Pre-season games won't be made up.
- AAA teams can call up a player from AA if they lose one of their players before Opening Day.
- It's optional to call up a AA player after Opening Day
 - Notify Player Agent to determine eligibility of that child.
 - Player Agent notifies AA Division Director if child is eligible.
 - AA Director notifies AA manager if call-up is approved.
 - AAA manager then calls the player – this is the last step, not the first.
- No call ups after May 15th.



Tournament Seeding

- Win/loss/tie record will determine the post-season tournament seeding.
- If two teams have a tied record after the regular season:
 - Head-to-head win/loss record
 - Record vs teams seeded above, starting with first seed
 - Fewest runs allowed in head-to-head games
 - Record vs teams below, starting with the next team down in the standings
 - Coin flip



Safety First

- Check the fields before practice and games
 - Email Division Director or Brendan Murphy (brendan_murphy@comcast.net) ASAP about any hazardous conditions
- All male players wear a cup/athletic supporter
 - Managers: keep an extra cup in the team bag
- Catchers must wear a cup & mask with throat guard
- Helmets must always be worn at bat and in the base paths
- Cold packs must be kept on hand at all times.
- Managers must keep a signed printed copy of the medical forms on each player in your team bag in case of emergency
- HLL uses breakaway bases and a double 1st base
 - If a runner slides, the top of the base will separate from the bottom to prevent ankle and knee injuries
 - The white side of 1st base is on the field, the orange side is out of bounds
 - Coach the kids to run across the orange side of 1st and run straight, out of bounds
 - Coach the 1st baseman to use the white side and run into bounds after tagging the base



Crocker Fields

- Field 1 – used for all games and some practices
 - Dirt infield
 - Portable raised mound
 - Electronic scoreboard
 - Lock box to store all equipment
- Field 2 – used only for practices
 - All grass
 - No permanent backstop
- Check the field (esp the outfield) before practices and games
- Respect the field - keep it clean!



Important Upcoming Dates

- Jan 24th Thursday – What to Expect Night
 - DO board room
- Jan 26th Saturday – Makeup tryouts
 - 10-11am District Field
- Feb 2nd Saturday – Mandatory Manager/Coach meeting
 - 9am-Noon San Mateo Library – upstairs
- Feb 4th Monday – AAA practices begin
- March 2nd Saturday – Opening Day
- April 20th Saturday – Photo make-up day
- March 29th Friday – April 7th Sunday – Hillsborough Schools Spring Break – no games or practices



Practice Schedule Overview

- Preseason – Monday February 4th to Friday March 1st
 - 1 hour midweek practice – on Crocker 1 or 2
 - 1 hour Saturday practice – on Crocker 1
 - 1 hour Sunday practice – split Crocker 1 (field) and Crocker 2 (grass) with another team
- Post Opening Day – effective Sunday March 3rd
 - 1 hour midweek practice – Crocker 1
 - 1 hour split Sunday practice
- Batting cage time at District Field TBD
 - Probably 1 hour midweek cage time, but not every week
 - May start in early March



Season Overview

- Preseason – Saturday March 2nd to Friday March 15th
- Regular season – Saturday March 16th to Wednesday May 8th
- One weekend game, one weeknight game per week during both pre-season and regular season
- Playoff tournament – Saturday May 11th to Thursday May 23rd
- There will be at least one weekday bye for each team



Team Meeting & Communication

- Call players immediately after draft
 - Meeting ends at 9pm
 - Call that night
 - Identify team parent
 - To snack or not to snack
 - Parent contact list
- Schedule player/parent meeting
 - Within next week would be best
- Coaches/Parent Meeting
 - Pass out Team Roster
 - Review rules
 - Review practice/game schedules
 - Hand out uniforms (they buy belt, sleeves, pants w /loops)
 - Identify volunteers (team parent, snack, additional coaching)
 - Be on time drop off & pick up
 - Rainout check website www.hllbaseball.org



Contacting me

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Group Discussion Points

- Drafting twins or siblings both in AAA.
- Chalk
- Bunting
- Stealing home in 1st and 3rd situations
- 20 runs/4th inning mercy rule
- Delay of game calls



THANK YOU