

HLL AA DIVISION LOCAL PLAYOFF RULES

2017 SEASON

Pitch count & batting

1. Strict 7-pitch maximum, regardless of good/bad pitches, unless it is a foul on the 7th pitch. No out for sit downs. It could be 10+ pitches if they foul off 4+ in a row. The 7 vs. 6 pitches is to allow for occasional bad pitches by the machine, and to eliminate discretion on good/bad pitches.
2. No bunts.
3. Use the 3.0 speed setting on the 2-wheel pitching machine. The single wheel pitching machine should be closer to 3.5 speed.

Base running & overthrows

4. Base runners may not leave a base until the ball is hit. If a runner leaves before contact is made and an attempted play is made on that runner (force out or tag out), then the umpire can call the player out at their discretion if they believe the outcome may have been impacted. If no attempted play is made but the runner left early, the umpire should send runners back to the most likely bases that they would have reached without leaving early.
5. Once the ball is in the vicinity of the pitching mound/machine and is either caught by the pitcher or passes the point where it should have been caught, the play stops. A runner who is not more than half way to a base at the time the ball either arrives at or passes the pitcher shall return to the previous base. In the event that the pitcher picks up a ball on the ground that has not been thrown, then he/she must hold the ball to stop the play (i.e. if they field the ball and intend to make a play, the play does not stop). If the ball is in play in the field, you can continue to run until it goes to / near the pitching mound/machine.
6. If an overthrow is made at first, third or home and the ball is out of play, then baserunners can take the next base (if they are past halfway between first and second when the overthrow is made, then they can go to third). If the defensive team makes another overthrow on the same play, then the runners can advance again subject to the one base per overthrow rule. If an overthrow is made at second base, it is considered a live ball and play does not stop until it is in the vicinity of the pitcher, per rule # 5.
7. FYI, runners rounding 1st base – unless the runner attempts to go to 2nd base, the runner can round the base into fair territory without being tagged out. See Little League Rule 7.08(c).

8. If the ball hits the machine or the coach operating the machine, dead ball single. All base runners advance one base but the play is dead.

Fielding

9. The outfielders should not be positioned as back-up infielders before the ball has been hit. They should be at least 5 yards from the base lines, though we won't be measuring, marking and enforcing this. A simple way to explain this – an outfielder should generally throw the ball to an infielder at the base to make an out. We do not want to see the Center Fielder repeatedly playing back-up 2nd, fielding a groundball and recording a force out by running to the bag. We can live with letting the kid run and touch the base as long as he is positioned correctly at the beginning of the play and we recognize it will be tough to enforce, but the idea is that as long as he's not standing in the vicinity of the base before the ball is hit, then let the play happen naturally.

Line-ups and innings played

10. Due to teams having uneven numbers on defensive, at most 10 players can play on defense each inning. Four outfielders plus six infielders. If you only have 9, you may play with 3 outfielders. This means some players may play only 3 innings if you have 11 or 12 players at your game. All players must still play two infield innings (see rule # 12 below), so the inning on the bench is instead of playing in the outfield.
11. We will play 4 inning games. If there is a tie after 4 – then play a 5th or more as needed.
12. Every player must play at least two innings in the infield, including at most one inning as a catcher, before any player can play a third inning in the infield. No player may play all four innings in the infield. I'd like coaches to share roster cards with the opposing team to ensure they abide by this, as I know it was a contentious issue in previous years playoffs. Last minute changes due to a missing player are fine so long as managers follow the rule and let the other team know. Prepare a 5-inning line-up in advance to use in case of a tie, where all players play at least two of the first four innings in the infield. If a 5th inning is necessary, every player must play a third inning in the infield when possible. No player is allowed to play a fourth inning in the infield until every player has played a third infield inning.

Run limit

13. Inning ends when the 6th run is scored, no further runs will be recorded even on the same play. The effect of this rule is that if either team is leading by 7+ runs going into the 4th inning, then the winner of the game is decided already because the gap cannot be closed due to the 6-run limit. It is then up to the trailing team's manager/coaches to decide whether to go ahead and play the 4th inning for fun, or whether they would rather end the game at the bottom of the 3rd inning.

14. Unbalanced teams (e.g. 11 players vs. 9 players) won't be an issue for batting because we are using a 6-run limit instead of batting once through the order. The stopping point of an inning will be only the 6th run or 3 outs, not the number of batters who have batted in the inning. If neither of those has happened and you have cycled all the way through your order, then start again at the beginning of your order and keep playing the inning until 3 outs are made or the 6th run is scored.

Other

15. At most, two coaches from the defensive team may stand in the outfield to help coach their team.
16. The umpires will be kids and they may make unexpected calls. They are learning too. You can ask them if they saw the play and had a clear view. If they say yes, then it is their call and can't be overturned. If they say no, you can ask them to confer with the other umpire, but **only the Manager can talk to the umpires**. Don't let any of your base coaches try to influence calls with safe or out signs, or groaning, etc. Please communicate this to your co-coaches. There are some passionate Dads out there that lose track of the fact that these are 7-8 year olds.
17. After the game – the Winning team should email League President Doug Robbins at douglas.r.robbins@gmail.com. He will post the result onto the HLL web site.