

# **Tennessee Little League District and State Coach Pitch (Softball and Baseball) Tournament Rules and Guidelines**

These rules were approved for play by the District Administrators of Tennessee. These supplemental rules are to be used in conjunction with the Official Little League Rulebook. The following options, rules and clarifications shall be used throughout the tournament.

## **1. Objective**

- 1.1** The objective of the Coach Pitch Tournament is to provide six-, seven- and eight-year-olds the opportunity to participate in a baseball or softball tournament at the District and State level. All players and coaches selected for a tournament team must come from a regular season Little League roster. The regular season league must have scheduled and played, at a minimum, a 12-game (per team) regular season exclusive of playoffs and tournament games. (Forfeited games shall not count towards the 12-game regular season) Each player, with amateur status, who has participated as required by Mandatory Play as an eligible player in eight (8) regular season games by the start of Tournament Play.
- 1.2** Each team will consist of a minimum of 12 players and no more than 14 players on a roster, a manager, 2 coaches and one pitcher coach.

## **2. Definition of Terms**

- 2.1** See Little League Official Rule Book.
  - 2.1.1** There will be a straight line extended **four (4')** feet on both sides of the 40 ft. (baseball) or 35 ft. (softball) pitcher plate.
  - 2.2.1.** Once the adult pitcher has control of the ball the defensive coach may ask for time out to make an appeal on the previous play.

## **3. Game Preliminaries**

- 3.1** Both managers will meet with a tournament official to conduct the following:
  - 3.1.1** Coin toss to determine the home team or dugout. The winner of the toss has the choice.
  - 3.1.2** Exchange lineups and provide a copy for the official scorekeeper.
- 3.2** The batter's box, foul lines and coaches' boxes will be marked as outlined in the Little League rule book.
- 3.3** A straight line extended **four (4')** feet both sides of the 40 ft. (baseball) or 35 ft. (softball) pitcher plate.
- 3.4** **When occupying a dugout each team shall place all bats, helmets and catcher's equipment outside the dugout for inspection by the umpires no later than 15 minutes prior to the start time for the game.**

- 3.5 Both managers will meet with the umpires at the plate five (5) minutes before the scheduled start time of the game to provide copies of lineups to the umpire in chief and discuss any ground rules.**

## **4. Starting and Ending a Game**

- 4.1** All teams must be ready to start on time. The home team will take their defensive positions and the first batter on the visiting team will take his/her place in the batter's box.
- 4.2** The defensive team will place 10 players on defense, 6 infielders and 4 outfielders. Outfielders must be positioned on the outfield grass.
- 4.3** The offense will station 2 adult base coaches or 1 adult and 1 player.
- 4.4** A maximum of 5 runs or 3 outs per inning, whichever comes first.
- 4.5** 15 run rule is in effect: If the home or visiting team is ahead by 15 runs or more after 3 complete innings, the team that is ahead is declared the winner. 10 run rule is in effect: If the home team is ahead by 10 runs or more after 3 ½ innings or the visiting team is ahead by 10 runs or more after 4 complete innings the team ahead is declared the winner.
- 4.6** Teams will play each game with a continuous batting order. The batting order shall be established prior to the start of the game. Any player arriving late shall be added to the bottom of the batting order.
- 4.7** Players may be entered and/or reentered into the game provided each player meets the requirements of mandatory play, 3 consecutive defensive outs.
- 4.8** Infield fly rule is NOT in effect.
- 4.9** Each game will be played until 6 innings, or it becomes an official game. In case of a tie the 7th inning will be played without the 5 run per inning restriction. If the game is still tied after 7 innings, the batter that made the last out in the previous inning will be placed on second at the start of each half inning. The game will continue until a winner is determined.

## **5. Putting the Ball in Play**

- 5.1** When the umpire calls "Play" the Coach Pitcher shall pitch the ball to the batter.
- 5.2** The ball is declared dead, and the umpire will call time when:
- 5.2.1** The batter squares to bunt AND the player pitcher moves before the ball is released by the coach pitcher.
- 5.2.2** A batted ball comes in contact with the pitcher coach. No pitch is counted, and all base runners must return to the bases previously occupied.
- 5.2.3** A player is injured. Any runner(s) who is attempting to advance to the next base will be allowed to continue on to that base. (If a base runner is injured the last retired batter will replace the runner.)
- 5.2.4** Any player who has control of the ball and forces the lead runner to stop on a base or return to last touched base.
- 5.3** Defensive time outs will be limited to 2 per game. Offensive time outs are limited to 1 per inning. Time outs due to injury do not count. However, coaching during an injury timeout is not allowed.

## 6. The Batter

- 6.1 Each batter will receive 5 pitches or 3 swinging strikes. If the last pitch is fouled, batter will receive additional pitches until they strike out, hit the ball, or do not swing.
- 6.2 If the 5<sup>th</sup> pitch is missed or not swung at, the batter is out.
- 6.3 Bunting is allowed.
  - 6.3.1 The batter is out if the batter bunts the ball foul on third strike or fifth pitch.
- 6.4 If a batter squares to bunt, the batter shall not pull his or her bat back and take a full swing. Penalty: A dead ball no pitch shall be declared, and the batter shall be issued a warning. On the second occurrence by the same batter in the same game, the batter shall be declared out.

## 7. The Runner

- 7.1 Runners shall not lead off or steal bases.
- 7.2 Runners must have one foot in contact with the base until the ball reaches the batter or is hit. **PENALTY: Runners sent back as far as possible after play has stopped. See Rule 7.13 of Little League Baseball Rules.**
- 7.3 **Courtesy Runner: A courtesy runner may be used for the catcher when there are two (2) outs. The "courtesy runner" must be the player in the batting order who made the last out.**

## 8. The Pitcher

- 8.1 **The Player Pitcher.**
  - 8.1.1 One of the 6 infielders must play the position of player pitcher.
  - 8.1.2 The player pitcher must stand with both feet on the four (4') ft. extension of the 40 ft (baseball) or 35 ft (softball) pitching plate. The player pitcher is free to move once the ball is hit. If the batter squares to bunt, the player pitcher may move once the ball is released by the coach pitcher. **PENALTY: Dead Ball. "No Pitch" declared.**
  - 8.1.3 The player pitcher must wear a face mask or helmet with a face mask.
- 8.2 **The Coach Pitcher:**
  - 8.2.1 The Coach Pitcher may speak to the batter until the pitch is thrown. Once the ball is put in play the coach/pitcher shall leave the playing field in a direction that will not interfere with the play/ball and not return until the umpire has called time. If the coach/pitcher fails to leave or in the judgement interferes in any way, the batter is out.
  - 8.2.2 The Coach Pitcher must pitch overhanded (baseball) or underhand (softball) to each player and must be in contact with the 40 ft. (baseball) and 35 ft. (softball) pitching plate.
  - 8.2.3 The Coach Pitcher shall apply the courtesy of making sure that the defensive team is in position before making a pitch. The batter will not receive any benefit from the coach/pitcher doing this. The umpire, in his judgment, shall nullify any hit, return any runners that advance, and call a strike on the batter.

## **9. Coaching Rules**

- 9.1 All coaches and managers are responsible for the actions of their parents.**
- 9.2 There will be an adult coach in the dugout at all times.**

## **10. Protests**

- 10.1 All protests shall be administered as follows:**
  - 10.1.1 Protest may only be made by the manager and should only be made when the manager believes a rule has been misinterpreted by an umpire.**
  - 10.1.2 All protests must be made before the next pitch is made.**
  - 10.1.3 The District Administrator, tournament director or his/her designated representative will make a decision to resolve the protest before play resumes. A protest referred to the Southeast Region by a manager or coach could result in a forfeit as the ruling. All protests end at the district level.**
  - 10.1.4 All decisions made by the tournament District administrator will be final.**

## **11. Conduct of Teams**

- 11.1 Tournament Directors will ensure that:**
  - 11.1.1 Managers are responsible for the conduct of their teams upon arriving at the tournament site and until such time as they have left the tournament site.**
  - 11.1.2 ANY MANAGER, COACH, or PLAYER EJECTED FROM A GAME WILL NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE NEXT GAME. The ejected person shall leave the game and tournament site or his or her team will forfeit the game.**
  - 11.1.3 NO COOLERS will be allowed at the tournament site except for one cooler in the dugout of the players.**

## **12. Documentation**

- 12.1 Documentation will consist of an affidavit, birth certificate, map, and proof of residence and/or school form as outlined in the international tournament play. Birth certifications shall not be carried with the team after initial review.**