



Lake Zurich Baseball and Softball Association

9U Bear Claw Tournament Rules

The official Little League Baseball Playing Rules will be the main source or guide to govern play. The following LZBSA guidelines have been adopted by the LZBSA Board of Directors to incorporate and enhance the little league rules.

TOURNAMENT ADDENDUM TO MINOR RULES:

- A. No Full-Time Travel Teams are allowed!!! Team rosters must be composed entirely of players that participated on "in-house" teams during the season, and were chosen for post-season play.
- B. For tournament purposes, game scores and team records will be kept to select the teams advancing to the championship game. The top 4 teams or the winner of each bracket, plus Wild Card team(s) -- totaling 4 teams only -- will advance to the medal round. The seeding will be determined by 1) record; 2) head to head competition; 3) least amount of runs allowed; 4) pool play run differential; and 5) coin flip. Run differential for every pool game is capped at a 10 run maximum.
- C. Rosters and insurance certificates shall be on-hand with the Team Manager at all times. These documents shall be submitted and checked prior to the first game.
- D. Players may not be 10 years old prior to May 1, current year. Each team is required to have copies of all birth certificates at each game they play. Birth certificates will only be checked if there is a challenge regarding a player's age. If there is a challenge and a team is unable to produce a birth certificate, then that player will be declared illegal and the games he played in will be forfeited.
- E. Dugouts are first come, first served.
- F. All decisions by tournament officials will be final.
- G. Rosters will be set once the tournament begins. Any add-ons will only be made with the approval of the tournament director.
- H. Line-ups must be exchanged 15 minutes prior to each game. Changes can be made to a line-up prior to the start of the game.

1.0 MANAGER, COACH, PLAYER AND PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Managers, coaches, players and parents shall exhibit good sportsmanship at all times. Any action to taunt, intimidate or degrade opposing managers, coaches, players, parents or umpires will not be tolerated.
- B. Players will not throw bats, helmets or any other equipment to display anger, frustration or displeasure. Violators may be removed from the game, at the discretion of the umpire, for flagrant violations.
- C. Swearing by managers, coaches, players or parents, on and off the field, during games or practices, will be strictly prohibited. Violations during a game will result in immediate ejection.



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- D. Influencing the umpires, for example, yelling “safe” or “out” before the umpire makes a call or openly questioning or complaining about the umpire’s call, will not be tolerated.
- E. Arguing with umpires will not be tolerated and, if violated, managers, coaches, players or parents may be ejected and subject to disciplinary action. The Minors League is an instructional league for everyone, please be patient with everyone involved.
- F. All managers will be responsible for their teams, including coaches, players and parents, as outlined in the manager’s agreement.

1.01 MINOR TEAM STRUCTURE

- A. Each team will be comprised of a maximum of fifteen (15) players, and in no case will a team have less than eight (8) players.

1.02 PLAYING FIELD

- A. 60 foot bases
- B. 46 foot pitcher’s mound
- C. There are to be no batting cages, batting apparatuses, or swinging of bats outside the field confines before, during, or after the game. This includes hitting sticks and soft toss into the fence. This is for safety reasons as the parks will be heavily congested with players, coaches, families, and fans. Failure to comply with this rule may result in forfeiture and possible disqualification.

1.03 EQUIPMENT

- A. All players will need a full uniform in order to play. Gym shoes or rubber spikes are allowed. No Metal cleats. No jewelry may be worn on the playing field, unless it is medical alert jewelry.
- B. Only Minor League issued baseballs will be used in league games. Baseballs for games will be supplied before the game by the League.
- C. No bat with a barrel larger than 2-5/8 inches in diameter will be allowed. Only bats with a USSSA stamp and BPF 1.15 rating or a USA stamp are allowed in the tournament.
- D. All catchers must wear a cup.

1.04 GAME RULES

- A. All Players must play at least 3 innings in the field.
- B. Games shall be 6 innings, and no inning can begin after 1 hour 45 minutes. (During a lightning delay, the game clock is suspended). There is no time limit for the consolation and championship games.
- C. **Pool games can end in a tie.** However, should time permit, in the event of a tie after six innings, the teams will continue to play additional innings until time is reached or a winner is determined. There is no time limit for consolation and championship games.



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- D. If an elimination game is tied after the time limit, any new innings will be played under California tie breaker rules:
- The player who made the last out from the prior inning starts the inning on second base.
 - The inning will start with 1 out.
 - The inning shall be played out normally from that point.
- E. The mercy/slaughter rule ends a game when there is a twelve (12) run differential after 3 ½ innings if the Home team is ahead or 4 full innings if the Visitors lead. Likewise, if there is a ten (10) run differential after 4 ½ innings and the Home team is in the lead, or five (5) innings if the visitors are winning. **This includes playoff and championship games.**
- F. If a game is called, it is a regulation game if (1) four innings have been completed; (2) the home team has scored more runs in three or three and a fraction half innings than the visiting team has scored in four completed half innings; (3) If the home team scores one or more runs in its half of the fourth inning to tie or win the game. If a game is called after the start of the fifth inning, any partially completed inning will not count unless the home team has scored one or more runs in its half of the inning to tie or win the game.
- G. A coin toss will determine the home team during pool play. During playoffs, the highest seed will always be the home team. In Championship and 3rd Place Games if the teams have an equal seeding (two #1 seeds; two #2 seeds; etc.) a coin flip will determine the home team.
- H. Rainouts/make-ups shall be scheduled by the tournament officials.
- I. There is a five (5) run limit in the 1st through 5th innings of play; play will cease after the 5th run crosses the plate in an inning. In the 6th inning and the 6th inning only, the run limit will be lifted and teams will play until 3 outs are reached.
- **EXCEPTION to the 5-run rule (innings 1-5 only):**
The 5-run rule can be exceeded if a player hits an over the fence home run with runners on base. For example:
 - A Team has scored 4 runs and is still at bat with only 2 outs.
 - There are runners on 1st and 2nd base.
 - The player at bat hits the ball over the fence for home run. Runs for both base runners and the batter will count in the inning tally.
 - The team will score 7 runs for that inning.

1.05 GAME AND LAST INNING TIME LIMITS

- A. There will be a time limit on all games except for the consolation, and championship games.
- B. No inning shall start after 1:45 hours from the start of the game except for the consolation, and championship games. Note: An inning is considered to be started as soon as the last out of the previous inning has been made. If the 6th inning is not played, there will be no bat around. (During a lightning delay, the game clock is suspended).
- C. **If the home team is ahead and at bat when the 1:45 time limit is reached the game will end immediately.**



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- D. In pool play, should time permit, in the event of a tie after six innings, the teams will continue to play additional innings.
 - If a game remains tied after 6 innings in pool play, time permitting, the game can continue into extra innings with the run limited lifted.
 - Games in pool play can end in a tie if time runs out.

- D. In Consolation and Championship games, there will be no time limit.

- E. All games must end by sunset/dusk.

1.06 TIE RESOLUTION FOR PLAYOFFS

- A. Once pool play is concluded, if teams have equal records, the following tie breaking procedure applies:

- 1) Head to Head competition.
- 2) Least amount of total runs allowed during pool play
- 3) Run differential = total runs scored (-) total runs allowed in pool play games
 - *To discourage teams from running up the score, the run differential maximum for any 1 pool game is capped at 10.*
- 4) Coin flip

- For seeding and/or elimination, if there is a 2, 3 or 4-way tie among teams, tie breaker steps will progress, in order, through the coin flip stage, if necessary. The tie breaker process is concluded at whichever step produces a result that separates the competing teams.

Example: 3 teams have 1 loss and have beaten each other in pool play. Two (2) teams will make the playoffs and also need to be seeded.

- Head to Head:
 - Team 1 beat Team 2; Team 2 beat Team 3, Team 3 beat Team 1
 - All teams move to next tie breaker step
- Least amount of runs allowed:
 - Team 1 allows a total of 13 runs
 - Team 2 allows 13 runs
 - Team 3 allows 17 runs (team three is eliminated from the playoff contention)
 - Both team 1 & Team 2 will make the playoffs
 - As team 1 & 2 have the same # of runs allowed, they proceed to the next tie breaker step; Run Differential to decide playoff seeding
- Run Differential:
 - Team 1 scores 19 runs – 13 allowed = 6 run differential
 - Team 2 scores 22 runs – 13 allowed = 9 run differential
 - Team 2 will be seeded higher in the playoffs

- B. For Championship & 3rd Place Games: The higher seed will be the Home team. If the teams are the same seed (e.g.; two #1 seeds; two # 2seeds; etc.) a coin flip will be used to determine the Home team.



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1.07 BATTING ORDER

- A. A continuous batting order shall be used.
- B. If a player should be injured (as ruled by the umpire) during play, and unable to continue play, his spot in the batting order shall be skipped. If a player leaves the end game for any other reason other than injury, an automatic out will happen every time that player's spot in the batting order comes up. If a player(s) arrives late to a game, he/they can be inserted into the line-up (at the bottom of the line-up). And they have to first sit out "one full inning" before they can either hit and/or field. The team manager involved has the responsibility to notify both the opposing manager and umpire.
- C. There is no drop third strike -- the batter is out and cannot advance to first base.
- D. Bunting is allowed, but any player faking a bunt and subsequently swinging away will be called out. This is a dead ball situation and all base runners must return to the base they occupied at the time of the pitch.

1.08 RAINOUTS AND LIGHTNING

- A. The Umpire will determine if the field is playable for games, or in calling of a game already in play when rain is falling.
- B. When lightning is sighted, the game will be immediately suspended. Players and coaches will immediately retreat to safety (e.g. car/building). After 20 minutes, play can resume. If lightning is sighted again (after the 20-minute period), the game shall be called.
 - Four (4) innings (or 3 ½ innings if the Home team is ahead) constitutes a complete game when shortened due to rain, lightening, etc.
 - If inclement weather becomes a factor during the tournament, interrupted games may be shortened and considered completed in an effort to keep the tournament moving forward to ensure we complete on time.

1.09 BASERUNNING

- A. No lead-offs. No Head First slides, except when returning to a base. If a player slides head first he is out.
- B. No delayed steals. Players cannot advance once the catcher begins to throw the ball back to the pitcher.
- C. No stealing until the ball crosses home plate. Teams will receive one (1) warning for a runner leaving the base early and the runner will be sent back to the base occupied prior to the pitch. A second (2nd) offense is an automatic out.
 - a. All players must avoid contact, unless sliding.



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- b. Head first slides are only allowed if going back to a base. If not going back to a base, runner is out.
- c. Base coaches may not use physical contact to assist runners.
- d. Play is always "live" unless one of the following occurs:
 - i. The umpire calls "time-out"
 - ii. The pitcher has the ball and is standing in/on/around the mound/pitching rubber area.... Umpire discretion (approx. 6ft radius around the rubber).
 - iii. The umpire has issued a base on balls, and there are no runners on base. Note: The ball is live if there are runners on base at the time of the base on balls. After being issued a base on balls, the batter/base runner may attempt to advance to second base only if there is a play on him or another base runner. If no play is made on any base runner, the batter/base runner must stay on first until the next pitch is made.
 - iv. Catcher is throwing the ball back to the pitcher. There are no delayed steals (runner cannot run when the catcher throws the ball back to the pitcher). However, if the catcher overthrows the pitcher all runners can advance.
- e. After a pitch crosses the plate, runners may lead off a base. Once the ball is back in the pitcher's control and he is in the "mound/rubber area" (as described above), runners must return to the base occupied at the time of the last pitch. No player may "freeze" off the base while the pitcher has control of the ball in the mound/rubber area. If this occurs, that base runner is OUT.
- f. Courtesy runners (last batted out) must be used for the catcher after 2 outs.

D. Stealing of home is allowed.

1.10 SLIDING ON CLOSE PLAY – NO CONTACT RULE

- A.** All players must avoid contact at all times. Base runners will be required to slide on all close plays. Defensive players cannot prevent the runner from getting to the base by obstructing the base path or the base.
- B.** Base runners (and his team) not complying with the rule will receive one warning and on the second occurrence will result in an automatic out. Defensive players (and his team) not complying with the rule will receive one warning and the base runner is safe. A second offense by the same player will result in automatic ejection of that player.



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1.11 COURTESY RUNNER FOR CATCHER/PITCHER

- A. A courtesy runner may be used for the catcher and pitcher when the catcher and/or pitcher is on base with less than two outs. However, with two outs it is mandatory that the catcher is run for. The courtesy runner will be the player which made the last out of the inning.

1.12 PITCHING

- A. A player may pitch a maximum of 2 innings per game and maximum of 8 innings per tournament.
- B. One (1) pitch constitutes one (1) inning.
- C. Players may not return as a pitcher once removed.
- D. No balks.
- E. A pitcher must be removed after hitting two (2) batters in one (1) inning or three (3) in one game.
- F. A pitcher is allowed no more than one (1) visits by any combination of managers, coaches, or parents to the mound during an inning. Upon the 2nd visit in the same inning, the pitcher must be replaced.
- G. A pitcher is allowed no more than two (2) visits by any combination of managers, coaches, or parents to the mound during a game. Upon the 3rd visit of the game, the pitcher must be replaced.
- H. A visit constitutes any of the above mentioned persons from the defensive team stepping across the foul lines onto the playing field during the defensive teams half inning.

Note:

- o For the purposes of a coach's visit, the defensive team's half inning starts after the warm-ups are completed and play has started for the half inning.
- o If an injury occurs, the team will not be charged a visit to the mound. Any questions will be resolved at the umpire's discretion.

1.13 FIELDING

- A. Infield fly rule is in effect.
- B. No fake tags... offenders will be ejected from the game immediately.
- C. Fielders must not intentionally block bases or base paths. This is an act of obstruction. Obstruction is the act of any fielder who while not in possession of the ball or not in the act of fielding the ball, impedes the progress of any runner. This is a judgment call by the umpire.
- D. Free substitution will be in effect.

1.14 SAFETY RULES

- A. If a player is not wearing proper shoes (see equipment rules), he may not play in the game.



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- B. A batter must wear a batting helmet when batting or when on the base as a runner.
- C. All players must remain on the bench if they are not playing in the field or taking their turn at bat. They should be paying attention to the game and not running around. The only other people on the bench are coaching staff.
- D. There are to be no batting cages, batting apparatuses, or swinging of bats outside the field confines before, during, or after the game. This includes hitting sticks and soft toss into the fence. This is for safety reasons as the parks will be heavily congested with players, coaches, families, and fans. Failure to comply with this rule may result in forfeiture and possible disqualification.

1.15 UMPIRES

- A. The League will supply the umpire for the game.
- B. The Umpire's judgment is final!
- C. There are no protests.

1.16 COACHES

- A. Two coaches may be on the field during the offensive innings of games (one coach at 1st base and one at 3rd base). They may not cross the foul line except in the case of injury.

1.17 SPORTSMANSHIP

- A. Sportsmanship is emphasized in this tournament.
- B. Back up the umpires! Do not argue with the umpire regardless of the decision or call. If you strongly disagree, discuss it with the umpire after the inning is over and discretely point out where you feel the umpire was in error.
- C. Stress sportsmanship and fair play with your players.
- D. Have fun and enjoy the tournament! Make it a pleasurable experience for the players, managers, coaches, umpires and the parents.

1.18 Rainouts

All reasonable efforts will be made for the handling of inclement weather conditions. Rainouts will be rescheduled as soon as possible for teams to complete the tournament. In the event that games cannot be rescheduled, fees will be returned as follows:

- 0 games played due to rain outs and poor field conditions - 100% refund
- 1 game played - No refund (No Trophies)
- 2 games played - No refund (No Trophies)
- 3 games played - No refund