

# Sonoma Little League

## Bylaws & Local Rules

Sonoma Little League is a fully chartered Little League program open to boys and girls between the ages of 5-16 living within the boundaries of Sonoma Little League as determined by Little League Baseball. Our league plays in District 53 of the Western Region of Little League Baseball.

**The following bylaws and local rules were reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors on November 6, 2023.**

### **1. DIVISIONS OF PLAY-**

Divisional alignment and number of teams will be adjusted based on enrollment.

#### **Single A (Coach Pitch)- Ages 5-7**

Players who are league age 5-7 are eligible to play in the Single A Coach Pitch Division. Coach Pitch is our most developmental division designed to teach players basic skills of the game, such as: hitting, running to the bases, and throwing. The most important aspect is that the players have fun and hopefully develop a love for the game. Coaches will pitch approximately 6 balls to the players then if needed players will hit from a tee during games. Scores and outs are not kept in this division, teams bat through the order and play 2 to 3 innings per game. We try to build self-confidence in a non-competitive environment for the players hoping to develop a love for the game. Only adult managers/coaches are permitted to pitch in this division. Teams are selected by the Player Agents. This division falls under Little League Baseball Rules for Tee Ball.

\*see exhibit A for Coach Pitch Guideline

#### **AA- Machine/Player Pitch- Ages 6-9**

Players who are league age 6-9 are eligible to play the Double AA Minors Division. League age 6 year olds must have played one year of Single A (Coach Pitch) and be assessed by the league as capable of participation before playing in the AA division. This division of minors remains highly instructional and introduces players to specific positions and game scenarios. Strikes, Balls and Outs are recorded but no score is kept. A Mechanical pitching machine is used for the first 2-3 innings of each game and then player pitching may be utilized. Players will take part in evaluations to ensure they are in the proper division for their skill level. Teams are selected by managers in a draft under the supervision of the Player Agents and President.

\*see exhibit B for AA Guidelines

#### **AAA- Player Pitch- Ages 8-11**

Players who are league age 8-11 are eligible to be selected to the Triple AAA Minors Division. This division of minors is still instructional but introduces the elements of competition. Players pitch every inning at this level, scores are recorded and the season ends with every team participating in a double-elimination tournament. All 11-year olds are required to participate in AAA if not drafted to a majors team. Player tryout/ evaluations will take place before the start of the season to ensure players are in the proper division for their skill level. Teams are selected by managers every year in a draft under the supervision of

the Player Agents and President. League age 7 year olds may request an evaluation to play AAA. Players league age 7-9 that are not selected for a AAA Team during the draft will be placed in the AA division. All returning AAA players not moved to majors will be selected for a AAA Team.

### **Majors- Ages 10-12**

Players who are league age 10-12 are eligible to be selected to the Majors Division. This is our most competitive division of play. All 12-year olds must participate in the Majors division. Players are drafted by managers each year and become “property players” for that team until they age out of the Majors division. Players League Age 10-11 that are not selected to a Majors team through our draft process will automatically be placed in our AAA Minors Division (does not apply to returning Major players). Some travel for inter-district play is required for the Majors Division. League age 9 year olds may request an evaluation and Board of Director approval to play Majors.

### **Juniors- Ages 13-14**

Players who are league age 13-14 are eligible to play in the Junior Division. This is a competitive division of play using a conventional 90-foot diamond with a pitching distance of 60 feet, 6 inches. Travel is required for interdistrict play. Teams are selected by managers every year in a draft under the supervision of the Player Agents and President.

The Board of Directors may evaluate players on a case-by-case basis to place individuals in divisions that more accurately represent their skill level, regardless of age. However, the placement of any player MUST remain consistent with Little League Rules and Regulations.

## **2. DRAFT METHOD**

- **Majors Division-** The Little League Baseball Draft Plan A, conventional draft is used by Sonoma Little League. Below includes specifics to our league used with ‘Plan A’. The draft order is determined by the final placement of teams from the previous season based on overall winning percentage, including playoff games.. (Exception: The first-place team is always determined by the outcome of the playoffs, regardless of record, and that team will always pick last in each round of the next year’s draft). If two or more teams are tied, it will be broken by the results of the head-to-head games between the teams involved. If still tied, the tie will be broken by calculating the runs allowed per inning played on defense in all games played by the teams. The team having the lowest ratio receives the higher placement. Every effort will be made to play all games scheduled. However, it may be necessary to use winning percentage to determine placement, even if there is an uneven number of games played. Property players from the prior season will be placed on the draft board starting in round 2 until all returning property players are placed back on their team from the prior season. Rounds 1 and 7 will be left empty for all teams to make a new player selection regardless of returning property players. Brother/sister, manager and coach options will all be placed in the proper round per the Little League Rule Book, see excerpt below\*. Any options will bump property players down a round. The player ages eligible for majors each season shall be determined by the President and Player Agents after the tryouts and before the draft. The President and Player Agents shall also assign age restrictions to determine how many

players of each age all teams must carry plus or minus 1, this will vary from season to season. Here is a model from the 2023 season, every team must meet the following age restrictions: Seven- 12 year olds (up to plus 1), Three- 11 year olds (plus or minus 1), and Two- 10's (plus or minus 1). For example a team may take 7- 12 year olds 4- 11 year olds and 1- 10 year old, while another team may have 7- 12's, 2- 11's and 3- 10's.

The Draft Board shall be approved by the Board of Directors via email prior to the draft. The Official Draft Board will be shared with all Majors Managers via email within 24 hours of the draft meeting.

- When a team is added to the Majors Division the new team will always have the first pick in each round.
- When a team or teams are removed from the Majors Division all players from removed team(s) must tryout and must be drafted to a majors team for the upcoming season.

Practice field selection will be based on reverse draft order. Every effort will be made for practice field selection to take place immediately following the draft.

\*An option is an agreement between a manager and the player agent covering a special condition. All options must be in writing (except No. 1) and be submitted to the player agent 48 hours prior to the draft. The options are as follows:

A. Brothers/Sisters in the Draft:

When there are two or more siblings in the draft, and the first brother or sister is drafted by a manager, that manager automatically has an option to draft the other brother or sister on the next turn. If the manager does not exercise the option, the second sibling is then available to be drafted by any team.

B. Brothers/Sisters of Players Currently on a Team

If desired, a manager shall submit an option in writing on a draftee if the player candidate's brother or sister is a member of that manager's team. If such an option is submitted, the manager MUST draft the sibling within the first three draft selections.

C. Sons/Daughters of Managers

If a manager has sons and/or daughters eligible under Regulation II for the draft, and wishes to draft them, he/she must submit the option in writing. If so stated, the parent/manager is required to exercise the option at or before the close of the specific draft round, depending on the League Age of sons and/or daughters. Parent/manager option takes priority over any other option.

NOTE: These provisions also apply for managers having eligible brothers or sisters in the draft.

D. Sons/Daughters of Coaches

-A NEW coach shall not be appointed nor approved until after the draft to avoid "Red Shirting" of players through selective coaching appointments.

-A returning coach, through the manager, may exercise an option in writing to the player agent provided:

(1) The coach has served as a manager or coach in the league (at any level) for the past two years AND;

(2) The coach is returning to the same Major League team as last year.

IMPORTANT: In order for a manager to exercise this option, the coach must qualify under BOTH conditions above.

E. Draft Rounds

If an option is submitted in writing for the son and/or daughter of a manager or coach, such candidate must be drafted in or before the following round:

Draft Round	Little League	Intermediate	Junior	Senior
5	9-10	11	12	13,14
4	11	12	13	15
3	12	13	14	16

- **Juniors, AAA/AA Divisions-** Draft order is determined by a blind draw prior to the draft. A snake method of drafting will be used in these divisions. The Team Manager and 1 predetermined coach shall have their players placed in rounds 4 and 5 before the draft begins.
- For AA division Coach or player requests will be taken by player agents but are not guaranteed. We shall also accept requests of players to the same team for carpool reasons but are not guaranteed.

Practice field and Team Name selection will be based on reverse draft order. Every effort will be made for practice field selection to take place immediately following the draft. Returning coaches will have the first option to the same team name. If a different name is desired it will be based on the reverse draft order .

- **Coach Pitch Only-** The Player Agents are responsible for player placement, with final approval from the League President. Managers may request up to 4 players on their team; all other players will be placed by the Player Agents to make the most even teams based on age and experience.

Team names will be selected by coaches, order will be pulled from a hat. Practice field selection will be the reverse order of team name selection. Every effort will be made for practice field selection to take place immediately following the draft. Returning coaches will have first option to the same team name. If a different name is desired they will be placed in the hat draw.

Draft selections are confidential; at no point should anyone involved discuss when players were selected or not selected in the process. Anyone suspected of breaking confidentiality will be subject to disciplinary action by the Board of Directors.

**3. ALL-STAR SELECTION PROCESS**

Little League allows each local league to determine the method used to select All Star teams. Sonoma Little League has adopted this recommended method for selection of its All-Star teams. The details of the process used by Sonoma Little League are provided below.

**All-Star Manager Selection** - A Manager or rostered Coach is eligible to manage an All-Star team if he/she has adequately fulfilled all Manager and/or Coach responsibilities during the

regular season and is approved by the President. All candidates must submit a request in writing stating an intent to manage an All-Star team by the date set forth by the Board. Any/All Manager/Coaches must be in good standing with the League in order to manage or coach an All Star Team. If multiple Managers intend to manage an age group, the All-Star Manager will be selected at an in person meeting with vote by ballot. Eligible voters for the 10/11/12 team will include each rostered Major Division Manager and rostered Major Division Coaches (2 per team). Eligible voters for the 9/10/11 and 8/9/10 teams will include each rostered Major and AAA Division Manager and rostered Major and AAA Division Coaches (2 per team). In the event each managerial candidate receives the same number of votes, the League President, in consultation with the Board, will make the final decision on All-Star Manager Selection.

- 8/9/10 and 9/10/11 Division Manager and Coaches- The manager and coach(es) shall be regular season team managers and/or coaches from the AAA or Majors Division.
- 10/11/12 Division Manager and Coaches- The manager and coach(es) shall be regular season team managers and/or coaches from the Majors Division.
- Junior Division Manager and Coaches- The manager and coach(es) shall be regular season team managers and/or coaches from the Junior Division.

Each All Star Manager will select his/her rostered coaches within 48 hours of being selected as an All Star Manager.

No manager or coach may be selected for more than one All Star Team.

All Star Managers and Coaches must be approved by the SLL Board of Directors before announcements are made.

**Player Eligibility-** A Major or AAA player is eligible to be placed on an All-Star Team if he/she meets the Little League age, residency, and participation requirements.

- **Age:** A player must be prepared to supply an approved proof of age document as required by Little League.
- **Residency:** A player must live within the Sonoma Little League boundaries and be prepared to supply the Little League required proof of residency documents.. Players living outside of the boundaries must have had a Little League II (d) or IV (h) form filed during the season.
- **Participation:** A player must have participated in more than one-half the regular season games. Medical exemptions for minimum play in games may be requested to the Board of Directors for approval. The request must be accompanied by a doctor's note and made prior to the All Star Vote taking place. Players selected for the All Star team(s) will be asked to return a All Star Participation Contract signed by their parent/guardian in order to be added to the final roster.

\*see exhibit C for All Star Participation Contract example, to be edited each year as needed

**Ballot** - The goal of this election and selection is to build teams that will be competitive in our District's All-Star tournament and will proudly represent Sonoma Little League.

**Voting and Selection** - The President and Player Agents shall be responsible for managing the balloting and vote-tallying and manager meeting process. Sonoma Little League has zero tolerance for any player, coach, manager, League official, or parent campaigning for a player or interfering in the player selection process. If approved by SLL's Board, any player, coach,

manager or parent interfering in any way with this process may become ineligible for tournament play. If a player does not participate in the voting at their team's designated time, no makeup period will be provided.

- Ballots will be counted and tallied by the Player Agents and President.
- If a Player Agent or President is unavailable to count ballots another Board Member may take their place.

#### **Process for Voting and Selection of the Junior All Star Team:**

- The first 9 Players selected to the All Star Team will be based on a vote of all players in the Junior Division. On the ballot for the players vote will be all players in the Junior Division. Each Junior player will receive a ballot and they will select 9 players that they believe should be on the All Star Team. Ballots will be counted and tallied by the Player Agents and President.
  - Any ballot containing more or less than 9 players will automatically be discarded.
- The next 3 players will be selected at a meeting of ALL Junior Managers. Eligible players will include all players in the Junior Division. If a manager is unable to attend they may send a rostered coach in their place. It is expected that managers will confer with their rostered coaches prior to the meeting in order to get their input. If the managers cannot come to a consensus of the players in a reasonable amount of time (approx. a half hour) a vote will take place. If a vote is needed each Managers will vote for the 3 players they believe should be placed on the All Star Team.
  - Where more than one player has an equal number of votes to qualify for the last position or positions, final selection will be made by the All Star Team Manager but must be approved by the President and Player Agents.
  - The final 1 to 3 players will be selected by the All Star Team Manager with approval by the President and Player Agents.

#### **Process for Voting and Selection of the 10/11/12 (12's) Year Old All Star Team:**

- The Player Agent(s) will make a ballot of all players in the Majors Division with a baseball age of 12.
- The first 8 Players selected to the All Star Team will be based on a vote by all players in the Majors Division using the ballot of just baseball age 12 year olds . Each Majors player will receive a ballot and they will select 8 players that they believe should be on the All Star Team. Players may vote for themselves and players on their own team.
  - Any ballot containing more or less than 9 8 players will automatically be discarded.
- The next 3 players will be selected at a meeting of ALL Majors Managers led by the Player Agent(s) and the President. Managers may select from all players in the Majors Division with league age 10-12. If a manager is unable to attend, they must send a rostered coach in their place. It is expected that managers will confer with their rostered coaches prior to the meeting in order to get their input. The goal of the meeting is to have an open discussion resulting in an agreement as to the next 3 players from the ballot. Taking into consideration the next highest vote getters. If a consensus can not be reached in a reasonable amount of time there will be a vote for the remaining spots. The managers will have an open vote tallied by the Player Agent(s). If there is a tie in the vote for the final players those players

who received the same number of votes will be re-voted on. In the event of an unbroken tie the final decision for tied players will be determined by the All Star Manager.

- The final **1 to 3** players will be selected by the All Star Team Manager prior to the completion of the meeting with approval by the President and Player Agents. The All Star Team Manager may select any player with a league age of 10, 11 or 12 in the Majors Division. Their selections should take into account the discussions with managers at the meeting and specific needs for each All Star Team
  - Players getting high votes but not making the cut should be (privately) considered as alternates as needed. Or if they are under 12 they should be strongly considered for placement on an age appropriate team.

#### **Process for Selection of the 8/9/10 (10's) and 9/10/11 (11's) Year Old All Star Teams:**

- The Player Agent(s) will make a ballot for each of the age categories.
  - All players in the Majors Division with a baseball age of 11 on one ballot.
  - All players in the Majors Division with a baseball age of 9 and 10 on one ballot.
- The first **8** Players selected to the All Star Teams will be based on a vote by all players in the Majors Division using the respective age ballots. Each Majors player will receive a ballot and they will select **8** players per ballot that they believe should be on the All Star Teams. Players may vote for themselves and players on their own team.
  - Any ballot containing more or less than 8 players will automatically be discarded.
- The next **3** players will be selected at a meeting of ALL Majors and AAA Managers led by the Player Agent(s) and the President.. Eligible players will include ALL players that fit the age category who played in either the Major or AAA Divisions. If a manager is unable to attend they must send a rostered coach in their place. It is expected that managers will confer with their rostered coaches prior to the meeting in order to get their input. The goal of the meeting is to have an open discussion resulting in an agreement as to the next 3 players. Managers should take into consideration the next highest vote getters as well as AAA recommended players. If a consensus can not be reached in a reasonable amount of time there will be a vote for the remaining spots. The managers will have an open vote tallied by the Player Agent(s). If there is a tie in the vote for the final players those players who received the same number of votes will be re-voted on. In the event of an unbroken tie the final decision for tied players will be determined by the All Star Manager.
- The final **1 to 3** players will be selected by the All Star Team Manager prior to the completion of the meeting with approval by the President and Player Agents. The All Star Team Manager may select any player that fits the age category in the Major or AAA Division. Their selections should take into account the discussions with managers at the meeting and specific needs for each All Star Team.
  - Players getting high votes but not making the team should be (privately) considered as alternates as needed.

#### **Process for Selection of Non-District All Star Teams:**

- The Player Agents will collect nominations from the managers of teams that represent players available to the non-district All Star Team.
- Once the nominations are collected all managers will meet to select from the

nominations the first 11 players for that team.

- The All Star Team manager will select the next 1-3 players.
  - Managers for non-district teams will be selected by a vote of managers and coaches if more than one manager is interested in managing.

Any player that declines District All Star Team participation declines participation on any District All Star Team.

All star teams will be formed in the following order, 10/11/12 All Star Team, 9/10/11 All Star Team, 8/9/10 All Star Team then any non district teams. Priority on players is given in order of the teams formed.

All Star selections are confidential; at no point should anyone involved discuss when players were selected or not selected in the process. Anyone suspected of breaking confidentiality will be subject to disciplinary action by the Board of Directors.

All players selected will have their names posted on the Sonoma Little League website and Social Media and will be notified by their All Star Manager in accordance with the dates set forth by Little League International.

All ballots shall be shredded immediately after official counts take place. Player ballots will be stored in a sealed envelope with the manager's signature across the tape until the official count takes place. Player Agents will be responsible for holding ballots at all times.

**Replacements** - Players voted to an All-Star team must be able to attend All-Star practices starting as early as May 15th and must be available to play in the All-Star games (generally beginning and during the end of June or beginning of July). If a player cannot devote the necessary time due to injury, scheduled vacation or other commitments, that player will be replaced on the All-Star team. The manager for the team, in conjunction with the league President and Player Agents will make that determination. No alternates will be chosen in advance of the need to fill a roster spot.

#### **4. IN SEASON PLAYER REPLACEMENT POLICY-**

The following local rules are established as a supplement to Little League Regulation III (d):

- If any player misses (2) consecutive games, or that player is consistently absent from practices, the manager must notify the Player Agents immediately. Failure by the manager to immediately report consistent absences at games or practices will result in disciplinary action by the Board of Directors.
- Managers should do their best to communicate with the players parents/ guardian about absences and any concerns before reaching out to the Player Agents.
- If continued absences are expected for reasons other than illness or injury, that player may be removed from the team by action of the Player Agents and with the approval of the Board.



- Under no circumstances should the manager take action to remove a player without consulting the Player Agents first. The Player Agents, will contact the player and his/her parents to determine the reason(s) for the continued absences and/or the player's decision to stop participating.
- If a replacement player is needed the Player Agents shall first determine if there are any eligible players on a waiting list. If there are no waiting list players at the time a replacement is needed then the Player Agents will gather a list of eligible minors players that may be selected to move up to the majors.
  - Replacement players must be the same age as the player that was removed from the Majors team. If no player of the same age is eligible then a player 1 year older may be selected if none exist a player 1 year younger may be selected.
  - Every effort must be made by the Player Agents and Board of Directors to ensure the replacement player move is not disruptive to the minors division nor does it give any draft benefit to the majors team for the next year.
  - All replacements must be approved by the Board of Directors.
- If a Minor Division player declines to move up to a Major Division team, that player will forfeit their eligibility to the Major Division for the remainder of the season.

NOTE: The replacement of players from the Minor Division into the Major Division during the last two weeks of the regular season schedule is prohibited.

## **5. FIVE-RUN/LAST INNING**

The following rule shall apply to Minor AAA division games only (Minor AA games will be played with the five-run rule in every inning, no exceptions):

- A five-run limit will be imposed in every inning but the last inning. The last inning will be the defined as follows:
- The first new inning that starts after 1 HOUR and 40 MINUTES and before 2 HOURS will be determined the last inning.
- This last inning will end when a team bats through the roster, obtains three outs or the home team takes the lead (no five-run rule).
  - If this inning only takes 10 minutes it is still considered the last inning regardless of the score or any remaining time left within the two-hour time limit. If a new inning begins before 1 HOUR and 40 MINUTES it will be played under the five-run rule. If that inning takes 40 minutes (which puts it past the two-hour time limit) the game is over and neither team will benefit from the "last inning" rule, regardless of the score.
- Games ending in ties will be considered regulation games and will not be continued.
- It is critical that the games start on time and the official scorekeeper documents the time of the first pitch.
- The umpire will be responsible for monitoring the game clock and inform both teams when the "last inning" rule is in effect.

## **6. PLAY-OFF STRUCTURE / DISTRICT TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS-**

***Majors and AAA DIVISION*** - All teams will participate in a double elimination tournament following the completion of the regular season. Seeding for this tournament will be based on regular season record. Ties will be broken by the results of head-to-head games between the

teams. If still tied, it will be broken by calculating the runs allowed per innings played on defense in all games played by the teams. The team having the lowest ratio wins the tiebreaker.

If two teams represent Sonoma Little League in the District Tournament of Champions. Team One will be the team with the best record from the regular season (Regular Season Champion) and Team Two will be the team that wins the postseason tournament (Postseason Champion). In the event that the Regular Season Champion and the Postseason Champion are the same team, the runner-up in the postseason tournament will be the second team to represent the league in the Tournament of Champions.

If one team will represent Sonoma Little League in the District Tournament of Champions, the team selected shall be the Postseason Champion.

## **7. PLAYER POOL GUIDELINES**

The league's Player Agents will create and run the player pool. The league's Player Agents will use the pool to assign players, on a rotating basis, to teams that are short of players for any particular game(s).

- Managers and/or coaches will not have the right to randomly pick and choose players from the pool.
- Pool play must not conflict with players' regular team games.
- When a player participates in a game on a team other than his/her own team, such player will not be permitted to pitch or catch in that game.
- Pool players that are called and show up at the game site must play at least nine consecutive defensive outs and bat once.
- A separate player pool shall be used for Majors and AAA.
- Pool players may only be used during the regular season.
- Managers may only request a pool player if they are certain to have nine or fewer regular team players. The manager may request as many pool players as necessary to field a team of ten (10). By way of example:
  - Team "A" only has nine (9) players - the manager may request one (1) pool player.
  - Team "A" only has eight (8) players - the manager may request two (2) pool players.
  - Team "A" only has seven (7) players - the manager may request three (3) pool players.
- The manager should provide the Player Agents with at least 24 hours notice in the event a pool player(s) is needed.
- If a manager becomes aware of being short players at the last minute they should contact the "officer of the day" ASAP.
- Under no circumstances shall a manager, coach, or player approach a prospective pool player to enquire about their availability to play for another team.
- Players electing to participate in pool play shall never be subject to approval by their team nor shall they be punished for pool playing. Any manager suspected of this behavior will be subject to discipline by the Board of Directors.

### **Procedure for assigning Pool Players:**

- Players will complete a "Pool Player Interest" at the beginning of the season. Players will be added to the pool in the order their interest emails are received.

- As the Player Agents are notified of a shortage of players for an upcoming game, the pool players will be contacted by the Player Agents on a rotating basis.
- If a pool player is asked to participate in a game and is unable to do so on that date, that player will be bypassed and the next available pool player will be invited to participate.
- If Player Agents are unable to make contact with a pool player after multiple attempts they will move to the next pool player on the list.

**Managers and Coaches Discipline:**

All managers and coaches shall follow the Sonoma Little League Managers and Coaches Code of Conduct while engaging in Sonoma Little League activities or be subject to discipline outlined in the Managers and Coaches Code of Conduct.

Documentation of Infractions will stay on file with Sonoma Little League indefinitely and consequences for infractions will be reset each year in October. Sonoma Little League President and Board of Directors may use past infractions to determine volunteer eligibility.

\*see exhibit D for Sonoma Little League Managers and Coaches Code of Conduct

## **COACH PITCH- SINGLE A GUIDELINES**

The objective of Minor A (Coach Pitch) is to promote sportsmanship, teach the fundamentals of the game and have fun. These objectives should be at the forefront of every team's philosophy.

### **GENERAL**

- (1) Games should start promptly at the scheduled start time and will last not longer than one (1) hour and forty-five (45) minutes. Use the entire time provided!
- (2) Each team should require their players to arrive at the field at least 30 minutes prior to the scheduled start time. This allows for field preparation and an organized warm-up.
- (3) Coaches are expected to have their players ready to bat and ready to take the field. Batting order and defensive positions should be established prior to the start of each game.
- (4) No score shall be kept.
- (5) Managers and coaches closest to the play shall make the calls of an umpire. Asking for help on a call is encouraged.

### **OFFENSE**

- (1) Each team will bat through the entire order each inning, regardless of outs recorded or runs scored. (NOTE: If, after two complete innings, the coaches wish to play three outs or five runs, they shall be permitted to do so.)
- (2) Any player that throws the bat will first receive a warning. If the same player throws the bat again during the same game, that batter will lose his remaining at-bats for the rest of the game. Coaches must emphasize the importance of not throwing the bat.
- (3) Single base hits only. (Exception: if a batted ball hits the outfield grass, or equivalent distance on a larger field, two bases are permitted).
- (4) There is no on-deck position. All players must remain in the dugout, without bats!
- (5) Coaches will pitch to their own team's players. All pitches should be thrown overhand. Normal pitching distance shall be approximately 35 feet but may change to accommodate individual batters.
- (6) Each batter will be given six (6) pitches, no exceptions! If the batter fails to hit any of the six pitches into fair territory, the ball will be placed on a batting tee. Balls and strikes are not called.
- (7) Stealing bases is not allowed. Sliding and tagging up is permitted.
- (8) First and third base coaches are permitted provided there is still one coach in the dugout.

### **DEFENSE**

- (1) Coaches are expected to have their players ready to take the field when necessary.
- (2) ALL players will take a defensive position on the field, every inning.
- (3) The nine defensive positions should be filled first (no rover position) with the remaining players placed in the deep outfield. All players shall receive equal playing time over the course of the season, with players getting the opportunity to play every position.
- (4) Catchers must wear appropriate fitting catcher's gear. A cup is mandatory for the catcher's position and highly recommended for all other positions.
- (5) Defensive coaches shall be permitted on the field of play.

\*Exhibit B

## AA GUIDELINES

The objective of the AA Division is to teach the fundamentals of the game, introduce situational baseball, promote and develop good sportsmanship and **have fun!**

### GENERAL

- (1) Games are to start on time and will go no longer than 2 hours (or more than 6 innings). No new inning shall begin after 1-hour, 45 minutes.
- (2) For the first half of the season, a mechanical pitching machine will be used for the entire game. For the second half of the season, a mechanical pitching machine will be used for the first three innings of each game with player pitching starting in the 4th inning and beyond. Managers can agree to modify this rule as necessary throughout the season but the goal of this division is to have players pitching at least half of each game by mid-season. **START WORKING WITH YOUR PITCHERS RIGHT AWAY AT PRACTICE.**
- (3) Scores will NOT be kept, except to keep track of the 5-Run rule per inning. The AA division is meant to be instructional, not necessarily competitive.
- (4) Two youth umpires should be assigned to each game, a plate umpire to call balls, strikes and outs, and a field umpire to make safe and out calls on base. Managers and coaches are expected to support and reinforce the youth umpire calls.

### OFFENSE

- (1) Keep the games moving! Get the players up to bat as quickly as possible.
- (2) If a batter ball hits the pitching machine it will be deemed a dead ball. The batter will be awarded first base and the runners on base will stay put unless forced up by the runner behind him (just like a hit-by-pitch).
- (3) If the ball is thrown by a player and hits the machine it will be a dead ball and all runners will be awarded an extra base from where they started (just like when a ball is thrown out of play).
- (4) When the pitching machine is in use, the player at the pitcher's position will stand even with the pitching rubber with one foot within the mound circle (dirt).
- (5) Runners are allowed to advance on passed balls. **No straight steals.**
- (6) A half inning will end when the batting team scores 5 runs, the batting team completes one cycle through the batting order or the defensive team records three outs.
- (7) When on offense, you may have one coach at first, one coach at third and one coach in the dugout. **YOU MUST ALWAYS HAVE A COACH IN THE DUGOUT.**
- (8) No on-deck batters. No player should have a bat in their hand unless they are running up to hit.

(9) Keep all players in the dugout unless they need to use the restroom.

### DEFENSE

- (1) Keep the games moving! Get the players in position as quickly as possible!
- (2) Each team should field nine position players. If a team is unable to field nine players, it is acceptable to “borrow” a player from the opposing team.
- (3) A player should get at least one inning at an infield position in each game. Try to rotate players through as many positions as possible throughout the season.
- (4) When on defense, one coach should be in the dugout, one coach should be operating the pitching machine and one coach may be on the field instructing defensive players.
- (5) Catchers must wear appropriate fitting catcher’s gear. An athletic cup is mandatory for the catcher’s position and highly recommended for all other positions.

# SONOMA LITTLE LEAGUE ALL STAR PARTICIPATION CONTRACT \*Exhibit C

**Signing this contract does not guarantee a spot on an All-Star team. Assignment to an All-Star team will be determined by Sonoma Little League’s All-Star selection process as detailed in the ByLaws. This document is to see what players are willing and available for ballot and roster purposes.**

This contract is to verify that each player Little League age 9-14 years of age in Minors, Majors and Juniors understands the commitment involved to be eligible for All-Star play. To ensure that everyone understands this, each player and parent must complete this contract and return it directly to the Player Agent(s) during the All-Stars registration period.

ATTENDANCE AT ALL STAR PRACTICES AND GAMES IS CRITICAL TO OUR TEAM’S SUCCESS AND IS REQUIRED

ALL-STAR TEAM	ALL-STAR DURATION (DISTRICT LEVEL)	TEAM ANNOUNCEMENT DATE
10’S ALL-STAR TEAM	<i>approx. June 26th- July 10th</i>	<i>by June 1st</i>
11’S ALL-STAR TEAM	<i>approx. June 26th- July 10th</i>	<i>by June 1st</i>
12’S ALL-STAR TEAM	<i>approx. June 26th- July 10th</i>	<i>by June 1st</i>
JUNIORS ALL-STAR TEAM	<i>approx. June 26th- July 10th</i>	<i>by June 1st</i>

ALL DATES ARE APPROXIMATE AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Please list all planned absences, conflicts, or vacations you are unwilling and/or unable to reschedule occurring within the dates of your child’s possible All-Star team, plus practices leading up to the tournament. For the 10’s and 11’s All-Stars teams you understand that if you continue to win, you will play until you are out of the All-Star tournament (up to the state level). For the 12-year-old Majors and Juniors teams you may continue to play up to and including the Little League World Series or Junior Little League World Series (dates can be found at <https://www.littleleague.org/>)


I, the undersigned, understand that:

- My availability may have an impact on my selection to a team.
- If I was suspended or ejected from a game or subject to disciplinary action during the regular season, this may have an impact on my selection to a team.
- If selected to an All-Star team, excessive absences from practices or absences from games may result in me being removed from the All-Star team as determined by the All-Star Manager and Board of Directors.
- Signing this contract does not guarantee a spot on an All-Star team. Assignment to an All-Star team will be determined by Sonoma Little League’s All-Star selection process as detailed in the by-laws.
- I must meet the minimum attendance of regular season games and satisfy all other requirements of eligibility per Little League International rules.

The signature of the player and parent(s)/guardian(s) below acknowledges the understanding and acceptance of this commitment throughout the All-Star season.

Player Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Sonoma Little League

### Managers and Coaches Code of Conduct Agreement

We, the Sonoma Little League, have implemented the following Sport Coach Code of Conduct for the important message it holds about the proper role of managers and coaches in supporting players. Managers and Coaches must read, understand, and sign this form prior to participating in our league.

Any coach guilty of improper conduct at any game or practice will be held to the following:

- 1st Offense: (1) game suspension
- 2nd Offense: (2) game suspension and ineligible to manage or coach in any postseason play, including playoffs, TOC and All Stars.
- 3rd Offense: Expulsion from league

In the event that a Coach/Manager is ejected from a game by an Umpire, and the ejection is deemed valid by the SLL board, that coach/manager will automatically serve a (1) games suspension.

Any coach who is ejected must leave the park and may not remain in the vicinity to observe the remainder of the game. If the coach incites more verbal aggression, or escalates the situation, does not leave the field or refuses to leave the vicinity, the game will be called and the offending coach's team will forfeit the game.

Suspended coaches must attend a meeting before the SLL board and Umpire in Chief within 72 hours to determine whether the offense warrants additional disciplinary action. Failure to appear at the time designated by the board will result in an indefinite suspension from all SLL activities until appearance.

***I therefore agree:***

- To never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character.
- To strive to instill the value of good sportsmanship in all of his or her players.
- To use appropriate tones and language at all times.
- To demonstrate positive coaching methods, how to balance discipline and fun and correct athletes without being demeaning.
- To learn the rules of Little League and the policies of Sonoma Little League and for the appropriate age that I am coaching and adhere to all rules during practices and games.
- To give players a chance to play each game in accordance with minimum play rules of SLL.
- To avoid use of alcohol and or tobacco while interacting with players during practices or at games.
- To not engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct with any official, coach, player, or parent such as booing and taunting; refusing to shake hands; or using profane language or gestures.
- To not indulge in conduct which would incite players or spectators against the umpires. Public criticism of officials or players is unethical.
- To meet and exchange cordial greetings with the opposing coach to set the correct tone for the event before and after the game.
- To defer all questions and communication to the adult game monitor or Umpire in Chief when all umpires are under the age of 18.
- To refrain from blurting out any call including but not limited to safe/out/runners interference as it interferes with the umpires ability to make a call in real time. (umpires to monitor and give warnings)
- To only have the manager of the team approach the plate umpire or adult game monitor.
- To only leave the dugout if given permission from the plate umpire or to take a place as a base coach or warm up a pitcher.
- To promote the emotional and physical well-being of the athletes and include all players without regard to race, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, disability or any other state or federal protected class.
- To respect the officials and their authority during games and will never question, discuss, or confront



coaches at the game field, and will take time to speak with coaches at an agreed upon time and place.

- To make sure practices and games are scheduled on a regular basis and that they will only be canceled with valid cause and communicated immediately.
- To meet with my team no more than 4 times per week, including games.
- To understand and practice basic first aid at all practices and games and will report any issues immediately.
- To discourage illegal or dangerous play.
- To attend monthly Sonoma Little League Board Meetings as required for my division of play.
- To complete all required training and background checks before meeting with players.
- To honestly complete a volunteer application and any other documentation for Little League.

By signing below, I agree to adhere to the above Code of Conduct and understand I will be held accountable for my actions:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Team

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date