

**Ahwatukee Little League**  
**2026 Local Regulations and Playoff Rules**

This document provides local Regulations, Playing Rules, Clarifications and Guidelines that have been agreed upon by the Ahwatukee Little League (A.L.L.) Board for the playoffs. Regular season local rules remain in effect unless specifically superseded by the playoff rules. National Little League Official Regulations and Playing Rules remain in effect, except as noted by these local rules. Additional items have been included for clarification.

**2026 Local Rules For Majors, AAA, and AA**

**MAJORS**

**4.04 Batting Order**

Ahwatukee Little League has adopted a continuous batting order requirement as prescribed by the Little League Rule 4.04. See Specifically Notes 2 and 3. Regarding Rule 4.04 Note 3, if a team starts the game with 8 players, an out is **not** called for the 9th position in the batting line up, and the team may skip over the 9th position without penalty.

**4.10(c)(2) Time Limit**

**At Mountain Vista Park**—If the game has been played for 1 hour and 45 minutes. Any inning which has been started prior to the time limit expiring will be completed. NO new inning will begin once the time limit has expired.

**At Ahwatukee Park**— Weekday games will end at sunset, the sunset time will be determined by the umpire in chief, prior to the start of the game. If a game is terminated due to the sunset provision, the game score will revert back to the last completed inning. There is no 1 hour and 45 minute time limit for the weekday games at AP.

Weekend games—If there is a game following the currently played game, then the 1 hour and 45 minute provision of 4.10(c)(2) will be in effect. This time limit will not be in effect for the last scheduled game of the day, but the sunset provision may still apply.

**4.16(a)** Number of players. A game may not be started with less than eight (8) players on each team.

**4.17** If during a game, a team is unable to place nine (9) players on the field due to injury or ejection, the game may be continued. A game may not continue with less than eight (8) players on each team.

**7.14(b)** A courtesy runner may be utilized for the catcher of record when there are two (2) outs. Use of the courtesy runner is strongly encouraged. The courtesy runner must be the player in the batting order who made the last out.

**9.01(d)** The stealing and relaying of signs to alert the batter of pitch selection and/or location is unsportsmanlike behavior. If, in the judgment of the umpire, this behavior is occurring, the team manager and those responsible including any player(s) and/or coach(es) shall be warned after the first offense. Those responsible including any player(s), coach(es), and/or manager shall be ejected from the game for a team's subsequent offense.

**7.18 Minimum Play.** Players must play at least six (6) defensive outs. If playing more than one game in a week (Monday-Saturday), at least 35 pitches each week must come from a league-age 11 year old.

## **AAA**

### **4.04 Batting Order**

Ahwatukee Little League has adopted a continuous batting order requirement as prescribed by the Little League Rule 4.04. See Specifically Notes 2 and 3. Regarding Rule 4.04 Note 3, if a team starts the game with 8 players, an out is **not** called for the 9th position in the batting line up, and the team may skip over the 9th position without penalty.

### **4.10(c)(2) Time Limit**

If the game has been played for 1 hour and 45 minutes. Any inning which has been started prior to the time limit expiring will be completed. If there is a game immediately following the game in progress then the game will automatically end at 2 hours (“Drop dead”) the score will revert to the score of the last completed inning.

**4.16(a)** Number of players. A game may not be started with less than eight (8) players on each team.

**4.17** If during a game, a team is unable to place nine (9) players on the field due to injury or ejection, the game may be continued. A game may not continue with less than eight (8) players on each team.

**7.14(b)** A courtesy runner may be utilized for the catcher of record when there are two (2) outs. Use of the courtesy runner is strongly encouraged. The courtesy runner must be the player in the batting order who made the last out.

**9.01(d)** The stealing and relaying of signs to alert the batter of pitch selection and/or location is unsportsmanlike behavior. If, in the judgment of the umpire, this behavior is occurring, the team manager and those responsible including any player(s) and/or coach(es) shall be warned after the first offense. Those responsible including any player(s), coach(es), and/or manager shall be ejected from the game for a team’s subsequent offense.

### **7.18 Minimum Play**

No player may rest twice in a row; all players must play at least 3 innings in the field.

A player must play at least one inning at a “key position” during a game and must play at least one of those key position innings during the first five innings of the game. “Key Positions” are defined as: 3rd base, shortstop, 2nd base, 1st base, pitcher and catcher.

## **AA**

### **4.04 Batting Order**

Ahwatukee Little League has adopted a continuous batting order requirement as prescribed by the Little League Rule 4.04. See Specifically Notes 2 and 3. Regarding Rule 4.04 Note 3, if a team starts the game with 8 players, an out is **not** called for the 9th position in the batting line up, and the team may skip over the 9th position without penalty.

#### **4.10(c)(2) Time Limit**

If the game has been played for 1 hour and 45 minutes. Any inning which has been started prior to the time limit expiring will be completed. If there is a game immediately following the game in progress then the game will automatically end at 2 hours ("Drop dead") the score will revert to the score of the last completed inning.

**4.16(a)** Number of players. A game may not be started with less than eight (8) players on each team.

**4.17** If during a game, a team is unable to place nine (9) players on the field due to injury or ejection, the game may be continued. A game may not continue with less than eight (8) players on each team.

**7.14(b)** A courtesy runner may be utilized for the catcher of record when there are two (2) outs. Use of the courtesy runner is strongly encouraged. The courtesy runner must be the player in the batting order who made the last out.

**9.01(d)** The stealing and relaying of signs to alert the batter of pitch selection and/or location is unsportsmanlike behavior. If, in the judgment of the umpire, this behavior is occurring, the team manager and those responsible including any player(s) and/or coach(es) shall be warned after the first offense. Those responsible including any player(s), coach(es), and/or manager shall be ejected from the game for a team's subsequent offense.

#### **Local Rule 7.16 Leading Off & Stealing**

A runner may NOT leave base until: (1) ball put in play or forced by walk/hbp or (2) pitched ball touches any part of the backstop. If a runner leaves early see Little League Rulebook re leaving early.

All throws by catcher on steals are without risk (A runner cannot advance to 3B on overthrow of 2B on a steal; cannot advance home on overthrow of 3B). The overthrow limitation **Only** applies to throws by the catcher attempting to throw out a stealing runner. It does not apply to plays on a batted ball.

Stealing home is not allowed and players are not allowed to score on a wild pitch.

#### **7.18 Minimum Play.**

No player may rest twice in a row. Every player must play at least 2 innings in a "key position" per game and at least 1 infield inning within the first 4 innings.

Key position as pitcher, Catcher, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or shortstop.

**A Defensive team may opt to play four (4) evenly spaced outfielders.**

### **2026 Playoff Rules for Majors, AAA, and AA**

#### **Objective and Format**

The Objective of the season ending tournaments is to provide all players in the Major, Minors, AA, and Farm Division an opportunity to experience playoff baseball.

The format of the tournament for all divisions will be double elimination at all levels up to the Championship game, which is a one game, winner-take-all, for all divisions regardless of playoff win-loss record entering the final game.

### **Section 3.00: Game Schedule, Field Conditions, Game Preliminaries, Pre-game warm ups, Line-up cards, Time limits, Scorekeeping, Post Game Tasks**

#### **Game Schedule:**

Once the schedule is completed all game times are final. Games cannot be rescheduled due to a team not fielding 8 players for a game, even if a coach knows in advance that he will be short on players or coaches. Only games canceled due to weather or Ahwatukee Little League scheduling issues will be considered by the Board to be played at a later date. If a team is unable to field 8 players for the game, then they will forfeit said game.

#### **Field Conditions:**

The Division Commissioner will notify A.L.L. if a field is not available for use because of field conditions. If the Commissioner has approved the field for use but the weather or field conditions are poor, the team managers must both agree the field is acceptable. Once the game is turned over, the Chief Umpire, only the Chief Umpire may end a game for weather, darkness or time. Even if both managers agree that the field is acceptable, the Chief Umpire has ultimate authority over whether the game will be played.

#### **Game Preliminaries:**

The home team shall take the third base dugout/bench and the visiting team shall take first base dugout/bench.

Both teams are responsible for field set-up and tear down.

Playoff game balls (2 per game) will be picked up by the umpires in the concession stand.

Both teams need to provide a scorekeeper (the home team's is the official scorekeeper of record)

For Majors and Minors, both teams must provide:

1. Pitching counts and logs to the official scorekeeper.
2. Line-up cards to the official scorekeeper and the chief umpire.

### **Section 4.00 Starting and Ending the Game**

NOTE (1): The manager/coach who attends the plate meeting at the start of the game will be the designated manager for that game. **Only the designated manager, at the plate meeting, can request to approach the umpire with any concerns about a ruling (not a judgment call) on the field during the game.**

#### **Time Limits:**

There are no time limits for games and there is no reverting to the score of a prior inning. Therefore, all players, managers, and coaches should endeavor to move the game along efficiently.

The Majors and Minors AAA Run Rule is in play for playoffs:

1. A team advances if it is up by 15 or more runs after 3 innings are complete.
2. A team advances if it is up by 10 or more runs after 4 innings are complete.
3. A team advances if it is up by 8 or more runs after 5 innings are complete.

The Minors AA & Farm Run Rule is in play for playoffs (the 5 run rule):

1. In the first half of the first inning of play, once the away team scores five (5) runs, the first half of the inning shall end. In each subsequent half inning, the opposing team may score the greater of: five (5) runs **or** as many runs to go five (5) runs ahead of the opposition's score which at that time the half inning shall end.

**Majors:**

Playoff games must play all 6 innings. California rules come into play if an inning is started after 1:45. California rules mean the inning starts with 1 out and a runner on 2B. The runner is the player who made the last batted out in the prior inning. Extra innings will be played until a team wins the game.

**Minors/Farm:**

Playoff games must play at least 4 innings (except for the championship game – which will play 6 innings). After 1:45, begin the inning with California rules (as stated in the Majors section). An inning started in California rules must be completed. Extra innings will be played until a team wins the game.

**Scorekeeping:**

- 1) The home team shall be responsible for keeping the official scorebook but both teams should have a scorekeeper.
- 2) The home team is also responsible for submitting the results within three hours of game completion so that the league can update the brackets/future games.
- 3) Both the home and away scorekeeper should compare scores after each half inning to ensure there are no discrepancies.
- 4) The official scorekeeper is to record the names of the umpires and team managers of both teams.
- 5) All official scorebooks are to include the record of all pitchers and the number of innings pitched.
- 6) Scorekeepers must also maintain the pitching log and return the pitching log to each team's manager at the completion of the game.

For games at Ahwatukee Park, the visiting team must provide an announcer (if the PA is available).

**Post Game Tasks:**

Both team managers and the chief umpire shall sign the official game book and pitching logs.

For the last game of the day at all locations, both teams are responsible for field take down. All equipment should be properly stored. Ahwatukee Park should be raked, watered and covered after games and practices.

**Majors Division  
Local Playoff Rules**

Teams will be seeded based on the final standings of the season. Standings will be based on points (2 per win, 1 per tie). In the event of a tie in the standings, tie breakers will be used in the following order: average runs allowed, average runs scored. If all teams have played the same number of regular season games (i.e., no forfeits), the tie breakers equate to runs allowed, followed by runs scored.

The home team for every game will be the team with the higher seed, except that on Championship Weekend, the team emerging from the winner's bracket will be the home team. The tournament format is double elimination – with the exception of the Championship game (will include one team with no losses).

## Section IV – The Players (i)

For the playoffs, the Majors Division utilizes a continuous batting order, and each player must play a minimum of 6 outs on defense. Managers are encouraged to avoid sitting players more than one consecutive inning. Open substitution is allowed. All other green book rules will be followed supplemented by the local rules below. **The 11 year old pitching requirement is suspended for playoffs.**

## Section VI Pitchers (c)

1. Maximum pitches per game is 85 (ages 11-12).
2. If a player has 41 or more pitches he cannot move to catcher in the same game.
3. If a player has 4 innings catching (1 pitch counts a 1 inning), he cannot pitch in that same game.
4. A pitcher cannot return to the mound after another player pitches
5. Rest (Can finish the batter after every threshold and pitch count reverts to lower threshold):
  - a. 1-20 pitches = 0 days rest.
  - b. 21-35 = 1 day rest
  - c. 36-50 = 2 days rest
  - d. 51-65 = 3 days rest
  - e. 65+ = 4 days rest
6. A day of rest is defined as a calendar day without pitching.

## Section 4.05

**No one except the players, managers and coach(es) shall occupy the dugout. Each team can have only 5 approved coaches on their roster (1 Manager, 2 coaches, and 2 alternate coaches). The alternate coaches can only be used in the absence of the Manager or 2 coaches. Fans may cheer on their teams. However, coaching from the stands is not permitted. Managers, Coaches, and players must request permission from the Chief umpire to leave the dugout for any reason.**

## 7.14 The Runner

With two outs a courtesy runner may be used for the catcher to help keep the game moving. The courtesy runner shall be the last batted out. Between innings a sitting player can wear a mask and warm-up the pitcher until the catcher is ready. Or (New 2023 rule) coaches may catch for a pitcher to warm him/her up.

End of Local Regulations and Playing Rules for Major Division

## **Minors AAA and AA Divisions Local Playoff Rules**

Teams will be seeded based on the final standings of the season. Standings will be based on points (2 per win, 1 per tie). In the event of a tie in the standings, tie breakers will be used in the following order: average runs allowed, average runs scored. If all teams have played the same number of regular season games (i.e., no forfeits), the tie breakers equate to runs allowed, followed by runs scored.

The home team for every game will be the team with the higher seed, except that on Championship Weekend, the team emerging from the winner's bracket will be the home team. The tournament format is double elimination – with the exception of the Championship game (will include one team with no losses).

## Section IV – The Players (i)

For the playoffs, the Minors Division utilizes a continuous batting order, and no player shall sit on the bench more than one consecutive inning (and must play three innings minimum). Open substitution is allowed. All other green book rules will be followed supplemented by the local rules below.

### **Section VI Pitchers (c)**

1. Maximum pitches per game is 75 (ages 9-10), and 85 for age 11
2. If a player has 41 or more pitches he cannot move to catcher in the same game.
3. If a player has 4 innings catching (1 pitch counts a 1 inning), he cannot pitch in that same game.
4. A pitcher cannot return to the mound after another player pitches
5. Rest (Can finish the batter after every threshold and pitch count reverts to lower threshold):
  - a. 1-20 pitches = 0 days rest.
  - b. 21-35 = 1 day rest
  - c. 36-50 = 2 days rest
  - d. 51-65 = 3 days rest
  - e. 65+ = 4 days rest
6. A day of rest is defined as a calendar day without pitching.

### **Section 4.05**

**No one except the players, managers and coach(es) shall occupy the dugout. Each team can have only 5 approved coaches on their roster (1 Manager, 2 coaches, and 2 alternate coaches). The alternate coaches can only be used in the absence of the Manager or 2 coaches. Fans may cheer on their teams. However, coaching from the stands is not permitted. Managers, Coaches, and players must request permission from the Chief umpire to leave the dugout for any reason.**

### **7.14 The Runner**

With two outs a courtesy runner may be used for the catcher to help keep the game moving. The courtesy runner shall be the last batted out.

### **7.17 Key Positions**

The key position requirement is removed during the playoffs. However, Players must still receive minimum playing time.

End of Local Regulations and Playing Rules for Minors Division

## **Farm (Machine Pitch) Division Local Regulations and Playoff Rules**

Teams will be seeded based on a random draw. The home team for every game will be the team with the higher seed, except that on Championship Weekend, the team emerging from the winner's bracket will be the home team. The tournament format is double elimination – with the exception of the Championship game (will include one team with no losses). The home team will always occupy the third base dugout.

## **Section IV – The Players (i)**

The Farm Division utilizes a continuous batting order. Minimum defensive play for each player shall be at least four (4) defensive innings per six (6) inning game, at least three (3) defensive innings per five (5) inning game, and at least 3 (three) defensive innings per four (4) inning game. No player shall sit on the bench more than one consecutive inning. Managers must have a written defensive line-up card available before each game. The lineup may be altered during the game but may be inspected by the opposing manager at any time. If defensive play rules are not followed, the game will be forfeited.

### **(ii) Defensive Play**

The defense is able to place a total of 10 players in the field, six infielders and four outfielders. All four outfielders must be relatively evenly spaced throughout the outfield. No Rover position is allowed.

**Minimum Play-Key Position requirements:** Players cannot play more than 3 innings at an infield position. All players must play at least 2 innings at an infield position. Infield positions do NOT include catcher. Players cannot sit on the bench for two consecutive innings.

**There are no key position requirements for playoffs.**

### **(iii) Defensive Field Coaches Removed**

There are no defensive field coaches allowed in playoff play.

### **Offensive Field Coach**

Only the base coaches at first and third base may coach or talk to the batter and runners. **The coach operating the pitching machine is prohibited from coaching or speaking to the batter and base runners.**

## **Section 2.00**

Bunting is not allowed.

## **Section 2.0 and 5.07– Inning**

In the first half of the first inning of play, once the away team scores five (5) runs, the first half of the inning shall end. In each subsequent half inning, the opposing team may score the greater of: five (5) runs **or** as many runs to go five (5) runs ahead of the opposition's score which at that time the half inning shall end.

## **Section 4.05**

**No one except the players, managers and coach(es) shall occupy the dugout. Each team can have only 6 approved coaches on their roster (1 Manager, 3 coaches, and 2 alternate coaches). The alternate coaches can only be used in the absence of the Manager or 3 coaches. Because Ahwatukee Little League uses one adult to operate the pitching machine, a fourth adult may be used in this division. Fans may cheer on their teams. However, coaching from the stands is not permitted. Managers, Coaches, and players must request permission from the Chief umpire to leave the dugout for any reason.**

## **Section 4.10 (e) Note (2)**

No game ending Run Rule will be used in the Farm division.

## **Section 5.10 (i) (dead ball)**

When a batted ball hits the pitching machine, dangling extension cord under the machine (not on the ground), ball bucket or pitching coach, the batter runner SHALL advance to first, the ball is dead, and all runners shall advance one base. A thrown ball that hits the pitching machine, ball bucket or pitching coach is also a dead ball, and runner positioning should be treated as a dead ball situation. All runners are moved forward one base without liability to be put out. Runners are awarded one base from their position at the time of the errant throw..

## Section 6.05

A batter is out when seven (7) pitches have been provided to the batter unless the batter fouls off the seventh pitch. Note (1) The batter may continually foul off the seventh pitch. Note (2) There are no called strikes or walks, only swinging strikes or foul balls. Note (3) If the seventh pitch is unhittable and the batter does not swing as viewed by the coach pitcher, the batter will receive one more pitch (this is *extremely* rare).

## Section 6.02(e)

If the batter throws the bat, the batter will receive a warning on the first occurrence. If the same batter throws the bat a second time at bat, the umpire has the discretion to either issue a second warning or have the player removed from the line up. On a third occurrence, the batter shall be removed from the line-up. Note (1) the batter is NOT called out for a thrown bat and the batted ball is a live ball. Point of clarification: The batter should stop the momentum of the swing and then drop the bat. Managers should train players to drop bat in foul territory in a circle approximately 5-10 feet up the first base line.

## Section 6.05

Note (1) the infield fly rule is not enforced in the Farm Division.

## 7.01 The Runner

There are no steals. The runner shall not advance to next base unless the ball is batted by the batter.

## Section 7.16

Definition (1) half way marks: During field preparation, “hash marks” should be chalked on the baseline between first base and second base, second base and third base and third base and home. These should be large enough (approximately 3 feet in length) to aid in the judgment call regarding what is half way.

Definition (2) relative control: Relative control is a judgment call. Relative control is defined as ball in hand, either the glove or throwing hand by a defensive player assigned to play an infield position (e.g., short stop). Relative control is not considered when an outfielder stands in the infield or runs the ball into the infield.

Definition (3) infield: Since we play on shared fields, the infield is defined as the dirt up to the grass at all fields used by Ahwatukee Little League. Infield includes a ball in foul territory in the infield area.

If a player is more than halfway to a base when relative control occurs, the runner may attempt to reach the next base. When a runner is less than halfway to the next base when relative control occurs, time should be called, and the runner should be returned to the prior base. If the defensive player possessing the ball throws the ball to another defensive player to make a play, the runners may attempt to advance on the throw. Note (1) It is the umpire’s judgment, or agreement between managers if umpire is not present, to return runner(s) to the previous base(s) if relative control is obtained by an infielder and the runner has not advanced more than halfway to the next base.

A) Runners may advance:

- a. As many bases as possible when a fair ground ball is batted to the infield or outfield and an infielder does not have relative control of the ball in the infield area.
- b. Only one base, at will, on an overthrow when an overthrow happens at any base and an infielder cannot control the ball in the infield area before the runner(s) has reached halfway mark to the next base. If any infielder has control of the ball before a runner(s) reaches the halfway point then the runner(s) must be returned to the previous base.
- c. A maximum advancement of one base can be made in one play as a result of overthrows.

Approved Ruling (1): runner on 1B advances to 2B, ball is overthrown, runner can advance to 3rd (at risk), ball is overthrown at 3B, runner must stop at 3B.

Approved Ruling (2): Batter becomes a batter-runner, ball is overthrown at 1B, batter-runner can advance to 2B (at risk), ball is overthrown at 2B, batter-runner must stop at 2B.

NOTE (1): It is the umpire's judgment if the runner is live or if the runner can return without liability to be put out. If in the umpire's judgment a runner hesitates or stops while advancing to the next base then they will be considered live. If a runner reaches the next base without stopping or hesitating then the umpire will return the runner to the previous base without liability to be tagged out. No other runners can advance during either situation.

d. Each runner can advance only one base at will on a fly ball when a fly ball is caught by an outfielder and the runner(s) has tagged up. The runner(s) can advance at risk to the next base. The half way marks do not apply to a caught fly ball that is returned from an outfielder to an infielder.

B) Runners cannot advance:

a. After a play or an error has been made in the infield and any infielder has relative control of the ball before runner(s) has reached the halfway mark to the next base.

b. A fly ball is caught by an infielder. The Runner is still at risk for not tagging up or stepping off the base after a caught fly ball.

c. A batted ground ball to the outfield has been returned to any infielder and the infielder has relative control of the ball before the runner(s) have passed the halfway mark to the next base. Runners must return to the previous base without liability to be put out.

End of Local Regulations and Playing Rules for Farm Division