



GLEBE LITTLE LEAGUE

2017 Spring Season Team Handbook

[www.glebelittleleague.ca](http://www.glebelittleleague.ca)

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## GLEBE LITTLE LEAGUE PRIORITIES TO CONSIDER

Safety	Safety should come first in practices and games. Minimize possibilities for baseball accidents
Sportsmanship	Teach it, promote it, demonstrate it, and enforce it. Spring ball is about player and coach development, not winning.
Commitment	Explain to our young players their responsibility to be at practices and games on time.
Team Play	Introduce the basics of working towards a common goal as a team, i.e. offence, defence, praising one another.
Rules of the Game	Teach the rules of the game to the players. Baseball is a game of situations. Explain these situations.
Self-Confidence	Playing sports and mastering athletic skills builds self-esteem. As a coach, you can help your players by praising their skills, efforts, and dedication to their tasks.

# Getting Started

## ***Player and Coach Development***

Spring ball is about the development of skills, attitude and sportsmanship in players and coaches. The goal is to create a love for the game in everyone involved. Glebe Little League is dedicated to promoting the game by helping players succeed in learning and playing the game. Coaches will be respected and supported as they develop their skills as coaches and leaders. Rules of equal play are mandated and specified herein and designed to ensure all players have fun and have a positive experience in our league.

Skills development and having fun while learning are vital. As such:

- players and parents should expect equal treatment for all team players, roughly equal playing time, and a nurturing environment focused on learning and fun;
- coaches should expect players to attend practices and to take skills development seriously;
- coaches should also expect parents to bring their children to games and practices on time and to be generally supportive in explaining strengths and weaknesses to their children as identified by the coaching staff.

Spring baseball is meant to be a fun learning environment where winning is at best the secondary objective and where team building and skills development at the team and individual level are paramount.

*\* Divisions playing an interlock schedule (this can apply to Junior and higher as well as summer ball play) should consult the district 2 or district 6 websites and/or Convenors for the applicable rules.*

## ***Sportsmanship and Conduct***

Glebe Little League's Policies & Procedures are available on our website. Players, coaches, parents, fans and executive members are all subject to the provisions. Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their players, coaching staff, and fans.

Umpires must be respected by players, coaches, parents and fans. Many of our umpires are young and in the process of learning the game. Coaches may respectfully and politely request clarification of an umpire's interpretation of the play, but not the decision. If a call is missed, coaches will NOT discuss it with the umpire. Coaches are reminded to teach players respect for officials by demonstrating proper actions and behaviour themselves.

No coach or spectator is allowed to coach a player at bat from the backstop area. No one is allowed to stand directly behind the backstop to coach the pitcher or second-guess the umpire. Anyone who violates this rule after one warning will be asked by the umpire to leave the field.

The use of tobacco products and alcoholic beverages in any form is strictly prohibited on the field. Profanity, verbal abuse, and obnoxious or objectionable behaviour by players, coaches, or spectators will not be tolerated. Coaches and players must not cheer against nor harass the opposing team. Support for their own players is expected.

All ejections carry an automatic next game suspension. If there is a second suspension, the offender's case will be referred to the disciplinary committee for determination.

## ***Player Discipline***

The coach may discipline a player for unacceptable behaviour (negative comments toward teammates / foul language, unsafe play, etc.). The plate umpire and scorekeeper must be informed as soon as a benching begins. The player may not field or bat until the time, as set by the coach, is over. No player may be disciplined for missing games due to medical or religious reasons.

## ***Team Equipment***

The League entrusts each coach with the care and safekeeping of team equipment. Return all baseballs at the end of the season along with all other equipment. These balls are used as practice balls for future seasons.

## ***Inclement Weather / Rainouts***

The decision to cancel a game prior to start time rests with the Convenor. Safety for players is the key factor in making this decision. This is done on an “as feel” basis. Generally, if it is raining hard during the day and still is at 4:00 p.m., the Convenor will email the coaches and cancel. The Convenor will also inform the umpire scheduler to ensure the umpires are notified.

If it is only a light drizzle and it looks like it might clear, the game is left on. Once at the park, the decision is up to the Convenor and umpire before the game starts, and only the umpire after the game starts.

Play will be stopped immediately if lightning occurs.

Players must come to the game if they have not heard from their coach – frequently the field conditions are not as bad as we think.

If a game is cancelled, and the umpires are informed a minimum of one hour before game time they will not be paid. However, if we can't or don't contact them and they arrive at the diamond, they will be paid for the game.

The home team coach is responsible for contacting the other team within one week to reschedule the game, and will notify the Convenor who will notify the umpire scheduler and book the diamond. Teams should make every effort to play the game as soon as possible. If a mutually convenient time cannot be agreed upon, the Convenor will reschedule the game after two weeks. No points will be awarded for games not completed by the end of the regular season.

## **At the Field**

### ***Start of Game***

The key to completing a game by curfew is to start the game at the scheduled time (by the umpire's watch). Team warm-up and pre-game coach talks should be completed and the home team ready to throw the first pitch at the scheduled start time. Coaches and the umpire should confer and agree on the start time at the beginning of the game, and the scorekeeper should note the start time on the game sheet. For all games, the home team will occupy the third base dugout and the visiting team will occupy the first base dugout.

## ***Field Set-up***

The home team is responsible for picking up field equipment, spiking the bases in the proper location, providing a scorekeeper / pitch counter, returning all equipment after the game, and providing two game balls. Each team is responsible for ensuring their dugout is cleared of all debris after each game.

## ***Player Shortages***

In an effort to reduce or eliminate the number of forfeits, teams have two options as follows:

### Borrowing Players

Teams may borrow players from the opposite team. This allows for players to get playing time at their level of play, rather than relying on younger players.

When a team has fewer than 9 players at a game, they will borrow defensive player(s) from the opposing team. Each inning, the borrowed player(s) will be the player with the last completed at-bat, and can be used in any defensive position except for pitcher and catcher. Borrowed players will only bat for their own team.

Example: Team "A" has only 8 players. For each defensive inning, they will borrow the player with the last completed at-bat from the opposite team. When they are at-bat, Team "A" will run through the line-up with only 8 players.

### Call-Ups

Teams are permitted to call up players from lower divisions. Call ups can only happen at the Coach Pitch, Minors and Majors levels. Call-ups are not permitted at the Junior level in order to safe guard player eligibility for the tournament team.

A call-up is a player in the final year in their division. A list of eligible and capable players will be established by the two division Convenors and provided to coaches. Coaches will inform the Convenor when a call up happens so that the Convenor can monitor which players are being invited, and where necessary ask the coaches to try to spread the opportunity more evenly between the players. Call-ups must be indicated on the score sheet with a "CU" marked beside their names.

Coaches may use call up players only when they expect fewer than nine (9) players at any game and only to bring the number of players up to 9. Call ups can NEVER be used as pitcher or catcher, and must be rotated fairly through the positions on the same basis as the rest of the team. They should only be used in positions where they can be expected to succeed.

## ***Safety***

In majors and lower there is no on-deck circle. Players may not handle a bat until it's their turn at the plate. Only the on-deck batter should be standing near the team's collection of bats and should not be holding or swinging bats. This is a safety issue and is not negotiable. Teams will receive one warning. Subsequent violations by any player will result in the coach being ejected which comes with an automatic next game suspension. The umpire is responsible for advising the Convenor who will notify the President and Safety Officer.

Players may bring their own bats to the game but they must meet Little League specifications and

must be shared with team mates (see bat specifications at Rule 1.10 in the Little League Rule Book).

### ***Pitchers***

The official scorekeeper / pitch count recorder will be provided by the home team. The official pitch count recorder must provide the current pitch count for any pitcher when requested by either coach or any umpire; however, the coach is responsible for knowing when his/her pitcher must be removed. The official pitch count recorder should inform the plate umpire when a pitcher has delivered his/her maximum limit of pitches for the game as noted in Regulation VI. The plate umpire will inform the pitcher's coach that the pitcher must be removed. Failure by the official pitch count recorder to notify the plate umpire and/or failure of the plate umpire to notify the coach, does not relieve the coach of his/her responsibility to remove a pitcher when that pitcher is no longer eligible.

### ***Game Record***

All teams are provided with a scorebook which includes a pitching log and a pitching eligibility form that should be signed off by both coaches and the scorekeeper after each game. Coaches and scorekeepers are encouraged to check the scores and number of pitches between each inning – no changes can be made once the next inning starts.

### ***Volunteers***

Glebe Little League (GLL) is run by dedicated volunteers. It takes several people to run a team smoothly and avoid undue pressure on any one person. The coaching staff is made up of a Head Coach and at least one (preferably two) assistants. Most teams engage a second assistant coach, and possibly a third assistant especially for practices and for times when other coaches are unavailable. Having a number of people involved helps more people learn about the coaching role and to groom future coaches.

In addition to the coaching staff, game coordinator, pitch count keeper (where applicable) scorekeeper and field set up are useful roles to delegate to parents. Teams often designate one person to keep pitch count during games (minors and up), and another one to keep score (cp and up).

We strongly recommend that coaches recruit a team administrator to handle team logistics such as emailing parents, and assisting with events such as opening day. A coach should focus on the players. Communication between the head coach and the team administrator is crucial - a meeting to discuss the details should happen as soon as possible after the team is formed.

### ***Umpires***

Umpires are assigned by the League – if there are no umpires on the field by the scheduled start time, the home team coach should attempt to find a volunteer. If one cannot be found, the game will be rescheduled as soon as possible. The home team coach must inform the Convenor of this fact as soon as possible after the game.

### ***Team Meeting/Team Fees***

Communication between coaches and parents is important. We strongly suggest you have a parent/coach meeting at opening day or during the first week – or maybe both. Here are a few things to consider for the agenda:

- overall philosophy of Spring ball;
- introduce coaches and team administrator – or recruit for these roles – reinforce background of coaches;
- practices, 2 way communication of concerns/player information between coach and parents;
- role of parents;
- significant rules/playing information especially for new players or those transitioning between divisions; and
- communication – emails, website, rained out games.

Team fees are not usually collected for Spring ball, and we suggest that teams do not collect money from parents. Each player receives a tee shirt, pants, cap and a trophy/medals at the end of the season. We do encourage post game team building which might involve a stop for ice cream on the way home, or breakfast or lunch after practice. Such things can be done user pay.

### ***Tee Shirts***

Each player receives a tee shirt and a hat. All players must wear their shirts – sponsors have paid for their company name to be on the shirts with the expectation that players wear them. When handing out shirts, be sure to take a minute to organize the shirts in order by size noticing that in most divisions there are youth sizes and adult sizes. Don't hand out by favourite or lucky numbers – suggest players get a new number and make it famous. The ideal situation is to hand out shirts with as many players as possible present all at once. Don't start your allocation with small and work up. Players tend to take shirts that are too big, and then you are in trouble when you don't have any large ones left for the bigger players. Keep extra shirts in case players are added to your team.

### ***Rules***

House league rules are posted on the website. Little League rules are published by Little League International in booklet form, copies of which are provided to each team. Coaches and team administrators should read and understand the rules and where clarification is needed consult the division Convenor or the Umpire In Chief. Divisions that play an interlock schedule with other leagues should consult the district website to access applicable rules.

## **At The Field**

### ***Practices***

Practices are a necessary part of learning to play sports. In coach pitch and below, practices are built into the structure of the program. In minors, majors, juniors and seniors coaches are encouraged to hold practices – game play is not sufficient for players to develop their skills. Practice plans, videos and coaching tips are available at [www.littleleaguecoach.org](http://www.littleleaguecoach.org). Coaches may also call on Convenors and the league's Director of Coaching to discuss how to run an effective practice. Coaches may wish to hold practices jointly with other teams.

Players and coaches are expected to be at the field at least 30 minutes before game time in order to prepare and warm up. Coaches should delegate tasks such as diamond preparation, getting equipment out of the bag, etc. in order to spend time with players in warm up. In addition to coaches, parents can be recruited to assist in warm up drills.

## ***Attendance***

Spring players are required to play in a minimum of 50% of the Spring games in order to be eligible to try out for Summer ball. Therefore, recording participation is very important. Please also keep game sheets.

## ***Equipment***

Each team is provided with an equipment bag with equipment appropriate to an average team in the division. There will be a supply of practice balls and game balls. Please try hard to return all balls at the end of the season – we use these as practice balls for the following season.

If you require additional or different equipment, or if something breaks, please tell your Convenor.

## **Miscellaneous**

### ***Playoffs***

Every team makes the playoffs. The format depends on the number of teams in the division and is indicated in the House League Rules.

### ***Trophies/Medals***

Every player in major division and down gets a trophy or medal on their last game of the playoffs.

Convenors will deliver them to the field or to coaches involved prior to the game. Teams are encouraged to line up on the base lines and conduct a brief “ceremony” for the outgoing players during which trophies are presented. This is special for the players and makes a nice photo opp for parents.

### ***Summer Ball***

Players who play at least 50% of Spring games are eligible to try out for a Summer team. Usually there are A and B teams in all divisions. Details are provided on our website. Questions should be directed to your Convenor or the Summer ball director.

### ***Complaints***

Try to solve problems by discussing with the parties involved. The next step is to involve the Convenor who will escalate the situation where warranted.

**Have a great season!**