

# 2023/2024 Viera Suntree Little League



## Baseball & Softball In-House Rules





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## **VSLL In-House Rules Mission**

Viera Suntree Little League in-house rules are concurrent or stricter than those of the official regulations and playing rules from Little League. The purpose of our in-house rules is to prepare our league players to achieve the developments needed in playing baseball and softball. Additionally, VSLL rules are for the safety and betterment of our league and our players.

These rules are subject to change by the VSLL Board of Directors. All managers and coaches should study and familiarize themselves with these rules.

VSLL follows a strict chain-of-command or protocol due to the large size of our league. The protocol should look something like this for practically all situations:

24-hr rule □ Team Coach/Manager □ Division VP □ VP of Operations □  
Player Agent □ League Vice President □ League President

In certain circumstances the League Officials will meet to discuss as needed. Efforts should be made to keep situations handled at the lowest level possible. Team managers and parents should apply the 24-hour rule to all game or practice related issues.

## **VSLL Vision**

The VSLL Vision is to **Develop Every Player, Teach Life Lessons and Have Fun!**

## **VSLL Pool Player Rules**

Divisions eligible for pool players are Majors Baseball, Majors Softball, Intermediate Baseball (50/70), Juniors Baseball and Softball, Seniors Baseball and Softball.

VSLL allows the use of pool players during the regular season and follows the Florida District 2 guidelines and Little League Regulation V(c) for pool players. Pool players must be assigned by the Player Agent only.

Regulation V (c) reads:

A pool of players from existing regular season teams can be created with players that are willing to participate in extra games during the regular season when teams face a shortage of rostered players for a regular season game.

- The league's Player Agent will create and run the pool. The league's Player Agent will use the pool to assign players to teams that are short of players on a rotating basis.
- Managers and/or coaches will not have the right to randomly pick and choose players from the pool.
- Players used from the pool will not be allowed to play any other infield position including pitcher or catcher. Pool players must play in the outfield.
- Pool players must bat in batting order positions 6 thru 9.
- Pool players **SHOULD** be equal to the player missing (using draft selection).
- The number of pool players that can be added to a team is as follows:
  - A team with 7 regular season team members can add 2 pool players.
  - A team with 8 regular season team members can add 2 pool players. Only one pool player can be in the game at any given time. The pool players will be each other's substitute.
  - A team with 9 regular season team members can add 1 pool player. The pool player cannot start, can only play a maximum of 6 defensive outs and can only bat twice, unless the pool player has the opportunity to bat twice in an inning.
  - A team with 6 or less regular season players cannot add pool players.
  - A team with 10 or more regular season players cannot add pool players.

VSLL In-house Tournament pool players shall be pulled from eliminated teams if available. Again, selected players **SHOULD** be as equal to where selected in the

draft. The Player Agent will retain oversight and assignment of all pool players. Minors AAA Kid Pitch Softball will be eligible for pool players only during in-house tournaments in accordance with VSSL In-house rules.

## **DRAFTS**

During the fall/spring seasons for Tball-AA divisions the VP's of those divisions with the help of the Player Agent will select their teams.

AAA - Majors during the fall will use a draft with some flexibility with the help of the Player Agent. In the spring, a Snake draft will be used to pick teams.

50/70, Junior and Senior divisions will use a draft depending on how many teams are formed based on the number of players. The Player Agent, League President, Division VP and team Managers will meet to approve the draft type and final team selections.

## **VSLL Majors Rules**

### Official Regulations and Playing Rules

The official regulations and playing rules of Little League Baseball and Softball will be followed. These rules are contained in the Little League Annual rulebooks provided to all managers.

In addition, the following rules apply to the Majors Division.

1. Majors Baseball Pitch Count
  - a. During the entirety of the Fall season and before Spring Break during the Spring season, pitchers are limited to 50 pitches per game.
    - i. If pitch number 50 comes in the middle of an at-bat, the pitcher may finish the at-bat.
  - b. If a pitcher throws 20 or more pitches in two consecutive games, in addition to the official LLI rules dictating prescribed days of rest, the pitcher must have one game of rest.
    - i. Exception: Five days of rest resets the pitcher.
2. Managers are to report all pitch counts to the Division VP within 24 hours.

Any violation of these pitching rules shall be brought to the attention of the Division VP and if needed, to the League Officials for team manager disciplinary action.

3. Drop Player Rule
  - a. This rule will be used in all, or any, cases where a player is injured and out for the season, dropped out of the league, or for any reason will not return to the team.
  - b. An eligible player from Minors AAA who assessed but was not selected in Majors Draft will be selected within 72 hours. The player agent must be informed and will approve the player selected. Willfully and knowingly not reporting the dropped player immediately will result in the team's manager suspension and length of suspension will be determined by the League Officers.
  - c. Up to April 30<sup>th</sup>, any player who assessed for Majors Division but was not drafted, may be selected in Majors to cover. All players who assess for Majors but were not selected will be notified of this rule.

4. Home Team Responsibilities

- a. The home team will supply two new game balls. Visiting teams will supply two serviceable game balls.
- b. The home team will be responsible for preparing the field ready for play. This includes:
  - i. Removing pitching mound and home plate covers and placing them outside of the field.
  - ii. Lining the infield foul lines and batter's boxes with chalk
  - iii. Raking the dirt (if necessary) around home plate and pitching mound
  - iv. Pitching mound and home plate to be covered by the last home team playing on each field.
- c. Home team will use the 3<sup>rd</sup> base dugout, and the visiting team will use the 1<sup>st</sup> base dugout.

5. Standings, Game Changer, and Scoreboard will be used in Majors.

- a. The Division VP and/or League Scheduler will maintain and update the standings for each team.
- b. All efforts should be made to use an electronic scoreboard for all games.
- c. Each game must have an official score book.
  - i. The home team will designate an official scorer.
  - ii. VSLL strongly recommends using the Game Changer app as the means with which to keep score, as it provides real-time visibility to all fans and VSLL board members whose roles/responsibilities are impacted by game play, compiles statistics, and greatly aids managers and league officials with All-Star selections.
    - 1. If a team does not use Game Changer, it must use an official score book.
  - iii. VSLL strongly recommends the visiting team keep score as backup.

6. Manager Selection

- a. All managers will be determined season by season. At times when VSLL has multiple candidate managers, the League President, Vice President, and Division VP will decide on the selection process.

7. Manager Preparation

- a. All managers are expected to come prepared to every game. The manager should have their lineup and defensive positioning set before every game to minimize delays during the game itself. A line up will be provided to the umpire.

8. Umpiring

- a. Every attempt will be made to cover all games with league umpires. If no umpires are available, then team manager/coaches and parents are responsible to cover umpiring for the league.

9. Sliding

- a. Sliding is allowed and encouraged for development of the players.
- b. Head-first sliding is not allowed unless returning to a base.
  - i. A player sliding head-first to advance shall be called out by the umpire.

## **VSLL Minors Rules**

### Official Regulations and Playing Rules

The official regulations and playing rules of Little League Baseball and Softball, Minor Division will be followed. These rules are contained in the rulebooks given to all managers.

In addition, the following rules apply to all Minors Divisions (Kid Pitch, Machine Pitch, and T-ball):

1. Continuous Batting Order
  - a. A continuous batting order will include all players on the team roster present for the game. Each player will be required to bat in his/her respective spot in the batting order.
  - b. If a player is injured, becomes ill, or must leave the game site after the start of the game, the team will skip over the player's spot in the batting order without penalty. If the injured, ill, or absent player returns they are simply inserted into their original spot in the batting order and the game continues.
  - c. If a player arrives late to a game, the manager will add the player to the end of the current lineup.
2. Home Team Responsibilities
  - a. The home team will supply two new game balls. Visiting teams will supply two serviceable game balls.
  - b. The home team will be responsible for getting the field ready for play. This includes:
    - i. Removing pitching mound and home plate covers and placing them outside of the field.
    - ii. Lining the infield foul lines and batter's boxes with chalk
    - iii. Raking the dirt (if necessary) around home plate and pitching mound
    - iv. Setting up the pitching machine or tee in perspective divisions
    - v. Pitching mound and home plate to be covered by the last home team playing on each field.
  - c. Home team will use the 3<sup>rd</sup> base dugout, and the visiting team will use the 1<sup>st</sup> base dugout.

### 3. Standings

1. No standings (wins & losses) will be kept. All Minors Divisions are strictly developmental.

### 4. Player Positioning

- a. Every player will play a minimum of two innings in the infield during the first four innings of every game. **Exception:** if a team has 12 or more players, during tournament play, it is exempt from playing all players 2 innings in the infield by the 4<sup>th</sup> inning.
- b. This rule assumes that no team will have more than 12 players. In the event a team has 13 or more players, the Division VP will work with the manager(s) to develop a workable player positioning strategy.
- c. Pitchers and catchers are considered infielders for the purposes of this rule.
- d. No player will play more than two innings at the same position per game, apart from a pitcher.
- e. No player will spend more than one inning on the bench per game unless there is an extenuating circumstance such as injury or illness.
- f. AAA and AA Baseball will have 10 defensive positions, with 4 outfielders.

### 5. Manager Preparation

- a. All managers are expected to come prepared to every game. The manager should have their lineup and defensive positioning set before every game in order to minimize delays during the game itself. A line up will be provided to the umpire.

### 6. Dugout

- a. No player is to have a bat in their hands unless that player is moving to or returning from the batter's box. An adult coach must always be in the dugout with players.
- b. In Minors A - Machine Pitch Baseball, all bats will be on the field against the fence outside of the dugouts.

### 7. Game Length

- a. All games will be one hour and forty-five mins (1:45) in length, from the start of the game. No new inning will start after ninety minutes (90) from scheduled start time. **All play will cease one hour and forty-five minutes from the game start.**

- i. For Minors AAA seeding games and all tournament play except the Championship Game, games will be no more than 2 hours in length. No new inning shall start after 1 hour, 45 minutes. All play must cease after 2 hours.
  - ii. The Minors AAA Championship game shall be no more than 3 hours in length. No new inning shall start after 2 hours, 45 minutes.
- 2. Time between innings
  - a. There will be ONLY one minute between half innings. The intent is to keep the games moving. For prepared managers, this should not be an issue.
- 3. Sliding
  - a. Sliding is allowed and encouraged for development of the players.
  - b. Head-first sliding is not allowed unless returning to a base.
    - i. A player sliding head-first to advance shall be called out by the umpire.

## **VSLL Kid Pitch Rules**

The following rules will be in effect along with the Little League rules and regulations as well as the VSLL rules previously described:

### **1. Pitching Rules**

One of the main goals of the kid pitch division is to encourage the use and development of pitchers. There is no limit on the number of pitchers that can be used during a game.

#### **a. AAA & AA Kid Pitch Baseball**

- i. All pitchers will have a 40-pitch limit per game, regardless of the pitcher's age. If a pitcher reaches the 40-pitch limit in the middle of an at-bat, the pitcher will be allowed to finish the batter.
  1. AAA only - After Mid-Season the Maximum goes to 50-pitches with the same guidelines. (Mid-Season is defined as halfway through the game schedule. Example: if 18 games are scheduled, MID-SEASON will start after the 9<sup>th</sup> game. Due to the potential for BYES and rainouts, the first team to reach the halfway point will be the Mid-Season for all teams).
- ii. For Fall Ball, the maximum is 40-pitches.
- iii. A pitcher may only pitch in two consecutive games, regardless of pitch count.
  1. Exception: Five days of rest resets the pitcher.
- iv. If a pitcher throws more than 20 pitches in a game, in addition to the prescribed days of rest, the pitcher must have one game of rest. However, if the pitcher reaches 20 pitches in the middle of an at-bat, the pitcher can finish the at-bat without having to rest a game.
  1. For example - If a pitcher starts a batter with 19 pitches, the pitcher can pitch a complete at-bat to the next batter. In this scenario, the pitcher is available to pitch the next game. If a pitcher throws his 21<sup>st</sup> pitch to a *new* batter, then the pitcher is ineligible for the next game.
  2. Exception: Five days of rest resets the pitcher.
- v. Managers are to report all pitch counts to the Division VP within 24 hours.

#### **b. AA Baseball**

- i. Pitchers must pitch from the rubber on the mound.
  - ii. In the event one pitcher walks 3 batters in the same inning, the offensive team's coach will come in to pitch to conclude the inning.
  - iii. With a coach pitching, the batter gets 5 hittable, coach pitches to hit the ball or is struck out. The at-bat cannot end on a foul ball.
  - iv. A pitcher pulled for coach pitch may return the next inning to pitch up to their max.
- c. Kid Pitch Softball (these rules will be used when playing a season within VSLL, if inter-league season, follow LL rules and D2 Rules)
  - i. No player shall pitch more than two innings in a game. A player may pitch a maximum of four innings in a calendar week.
  - ii. The maximum inning rule does not apply to outs recorded but rather applies to the number of innings in which the pitcher participated. If a pitcher faces a single batter in an inning, one inning will be counted toward the maximum inning rule.

Any violation of these pitching rules shall be brought to the attention of the Division VP and if needed, to the League Officials for team manager disciplinary action.

## 2. Scoring

- a. There will be a four-run limit in all innings played. All play will cease after either three outs occur, or four runs scored, whichever comes first (a play will come to an end and if more than four runs are scored because of the situation so then that's the only way more than four runs can be scored).
- b. The ten-run rule does not apply.
  - i. In AAA, after 4 innings, the 4-run or 3-out scoring will be lifted after MID-SEASON. Teams must get 3 outs to end the half-inning.
  - ii. For Fall Ball, AAA will keep the 4-run or 3-out rule for the whole season.

## 3. Base Running

- a. AAA Kid Pitch Baseball
  - i. Runners may not advance home on wild pitches, passed balls, or straight steals until after MID-SEASON. However, if the catcher puts the ball in play by throwing it to 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base in an attempt

to throw a base runner out or catch the base runner off the base, the runner at 3<sup>rd</sup> may attempt to advance to home.

- ii. In Fall Ball, runners may not advance home on wild pitches, passed balls, or straight steals. Fall ball is developmental.

b. AA Kid Pitch Baseball

- i. There is no stealing in AA.
- ii. All baserunners are limited to a total of one base on all over throws per runner during a play. There are no advancements on an overthrow back to the pitcher.

c. Kid Pitch Softball (these rules will be used when playing a season within VSLL, if inter-league season, follow LL rules and D2 Rules)

- i. There is no stealing home until after mid-season.

4. Umpiring

- a. Every attempt will be made to cover all AAA Kid Pitch games with umpires. If not, then team managers, coaches and parents are responsible to cover this for the league.
- b. In Minors AA Only: The first base coach and third base coach have the call at their respective bases. The coach on the mound (either coach pitcher or the defensive coach calling balls and strikes) has the calls at both 2nd base and home plate. In the event that there is a defensive coach offset behind the plate, that coach will make the call at home plate.

5. In-House Tournament

- a. A season-ending tournament will be held in AAA Baseball.
- b. The Division VP is the Tournament Director. If deemed necessary by the VP and/or the Board of Directors, a modified set of rules will apply to tournament games. All appeals or protests will stop at the Division VP.
- c. There is no tournament in Minors A, AA or interleague SB.

6. AA Baseball Coach Interaction

- a. Defensive teams may have one coach against the backstop, **offset** behind the catcher (not directly behind) as a catcher's assistant. They are there at their own risk and can only communicate with the catcher.
- b. No additional coaches or adults on field unless umpiring behind pitch mound

7. Hitting

- a. There is no bunting in AA Baseball.
8. Sliding
- a. Sliding is allowed and encouraged for development of the players.
  - b. Head-first sliding is not allowed unless returning to a base.
    - i. A player sliding head-first to advance shall be called out by the umpire.

## **VSLL Machine Pitch Rules**

The following rules will be in effect along with the Little League rules and regulations as well as the VSLL rules previously described:

1. Strikeouts
  - a. Batters will be given every opportunity to put a ball in play. Every player will be given **six** pitches, and an at-bat cannot end on a foul ball.
  - b. As a courtesy to the batter and opposing manager, the coach is asked to inform the batter when there is one pitch remaining.
    - i. Managers will not soft-toss or pitch the ball to hitters who are having trouble hitting the ball.
2. Defensive positioning
  - a. Teams will play ten players in the field. This rule will not apply if a team does not have ten players available for a game. When playing ten in the field, a team will have four outfielders all of which must have both feet on the outfield grass.
3. Scoring
  - a. There will be a four-run limit in all innings played. All play will cease after either three outs occur or four runs scored, whichever comes first.(a play will come to an end and if more than four runs are scored because of the situation then that's the only way more than four runs can be scored).
4. Base Running
  - a. A hitter can advance to second base on any batted ball that was not stopped by an infielder or in which an infielder did not commit an error.
  - b. There is no advancement of base runners on overthrows of any base.
  - c. The “infield fly rule” does not apply.
5. Umpiring
  - a. Typically, machine pitch games do not have formal umpires. On field Managers/Coaches are umpires. Closest coach calls it. All calls are final.
6. Coach Interaction
  - a. Only 2 coaches can be in the field defensively to provide instruction and encouragement. Another coach can stand against the backstop, offset

behind the catcher (not directly behind) as a catcher's assistant. They are there at their own risk & can only communicate with the catcher.

7. Bats

- a. All bats will be on the field against the fence outside of dugouts.

8. Sliding

- a. Sliding is allowed and encouraged for development of the players.
- b. Head-first sliding is not allowed unless returning to a base.
  - i. A player sliding head-first to advance shall be called out by the umpire.

## **VSLL T-Ball Rules**

The following rules will be in effect along with the Little League rules and regulations as well as the VSLL rules previously described:

1. Defensive positioning
  - a. Teams will play all available players in the field.
  - b. The defensive team is required to play 6 infielders in the proper infield positions. The positions are pitcher, 1<sup>st</sup> base, 2<sup>nd</sup> base, shortstop, 3<sup>rd</sup> base and a floater that should be positioned near 2<sup>nd</sup> base.
  - c. The remainder of the defensive team should be positioned behind the infielders.
  - d. The pitcher must be positioned on the pitching rubber.
2. Strikeouts
  - a. There are no strikeouts in the t-ball division.
3. How an inning ends
  - a. During each half-inning, all available players will bat for the team on offense. The inning ends after all available players have batted, regardless of the number of outs recorded or runs scored. Even if an out is made, the appropriate base runner(s) will remain on base.
4. Batting Tee
  - a. The manager or coach of the batting team must remove the tee from home plate if a base runner is coming home. The tee should never be used as a home plate.
5. Base Running
  - a. There are no extra base hits, except the final batter of each inning.
6. Coach Interaction
  - a. Multiple coaches should be on the field to provide instruction and encouragement. A coach or team parent must always be in the dugout.
7. Sliding
  - a. There is no sliding in any base in T-ball.

## **VSLL Juniors, Seniors, and Intermediate (50/70) Rules**

The official regulations and playing rules of Little League Baseball and Softball will be followed. These rules are contained in the rulebooks given to all managers. In addition to these rules, the District 2 Inter-league rules will apply.

### **1. Travel**

- a. Teams will travel to other local leagues within our District to play games. VSLL will host games on our fields as well.

### **2. Baseball Pitch Count**

- a. We will follow the Little League and D2 pitch count regulations.
- b. No one player may pitch the minimum 20 pitches in 3 games consecutively.
- c. Managers should maintain a pitch count to avoid over-throwing any pitcher.
  - i. For players in multiple divisions or other baseball teams, the Manager shall obtain pitch count from other teams to protect the player's arm and abide by the required days of rest.

Any violation of these pitching rules shall be brought to the attention of the Division VP and if needed, to the League Officials for team manager disciplinary action.

### **3. Home Team Responsibilities**

- a. The home team will supply two new game balls. Visiting teams will supply two serviceable game balls.
- b. The home team will be responsible for preparing the field ready for play.
- c. Home team will use the 3<sup>rd</sup> base dugout, and the visiting team will use the 1<sup>st</sup> base dugout.

### **4. Bats**

- a. An "on-deck" batter is allowed in a designated area on the field. The batter will assist the umpire with passed balls.

### **5. Manager Preparation**

- a. All managers are expected to come prepared to every game. The manager should have their lineup and defensive positioning set before every game to minimize delays during the game itself. A line up will be provided to the umpire.

## **Manager/Coaches Code of Conduct**

As a Manager/Coach representing VSLL, You hereby pledge to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for my team members. You will lead by example in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all my players and parents. You will do my best to provide a safe playing situation for my players. You will remember that You are a youth sports coach, and that the game is for the children. As a Manager/Coach, You therefore agree:

- You will not encourage any behaviors or practices that would endanger the health and well-being of athletes.
- You will teach my players to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
- You will demand that my team treat other players, coaches, umpires, and officials with respect no matter what.
- You will support other coaches and officials working with my players, encouraging a positive and enjoyable experience for all.
- You will not use profanity, vulgar comments, or personal insults toward any player, coach, spectator, umpire or official. You will not consume any alcohol or drugs during or before being around any of the players.
- You will not have physical contact with a player, spectator, umpire or official.
- You will not argue calls that will further delay the game, step out of the dugout, or make any historical gesture toward the umpire after an umpire's decision.
- I will not object to any calls considered to be judgment decisions by the umpires.
- As manager, I understand that I can be held liable for the actions of my players and fellow coaches.

Any manager/coach who fails to comply with an order from an umpire to do or to refrain from doing anything that affects administering the rules and regulations governing play is subject to ejection.

### **Ejection Process:**

After the ejection, the manager/coach will leave the fields and wait in the parking lot if needed. Per LL rules manager/coach will also serve 1 additional game suspension. Manager/coach is not allowed to be at the field for any LL function.

Within 5 days the manager/coach will meet with the Code of Conduct Committee to give their response that led to the ejection. The Conduct Committee shall be made up of the President, UIC, Coaching Coordinator, and Division VP. If the ejected party occupies one of those roles, the President shall replace the individual with a separate member of the Board of Directors.

Multiple ejections could result in being removed from the team and NO consideration for tournament or all-star manager/coach considerations.