

## **Expanded Special Games for Softball – 2009 Overview**

In response to requests for a more varied approach to organizing softball Special Games tournaments, Little League International has introduced Expanded Special Games for Softball for 2009. Because of the nature of softball and the wide differences between it and the sport of baseball, this initiative is limited to softball only.

The guidelines on the following pages provide modified playing rules to attract Little League players, coaches and parents to our softball program. These guidelines also will serve as a platform for considering future softball rule revisions without compromising Little League's core standards.

These guidelines are designed to alleviate many issues related to coordinating Special Game tournaments in softball. Specific adjustments have been made to game scheduling, participation, pitching rules, and team composition – intended for increased competition level.

Softball Special Game Directors are given the option to implement additional rule variations at the Major Division level regarding base-stealing and dropped third strikes. Some or all of the Special Games participation in Junior, Senior and Big League Divisions also will contribute to players' tournament eligibility with regard to regular season games played (see individual guidelines).

The guidelines are divided into four main divisions: Minor, Major, Junior/Senior and Big League. Age and physical development were considered when constructing the divisions and expanding the special games guidelines. To assist in scheduling, Little League approved brackets are available online at [http://www.littleleague.org/Assets/forms\\_pubs/Brackets\\_LLB.pdf](http://www.littleleague.org/Assets/forms_pubs/Brackets_LLB.pdf).

Little League is hopeful that these adjustments will entice softball teams and encourage leagues to coordinate more softball special game opportunities.

Except where noted in the Expanded Special Games for Softball Guidelines, the Little League Softball Official Regulations and Playing Rules will be used in the conduct of the Minor League Division Softball Special Games, Major League Division Softball Special Games, Junior League Division Softball Special Games, Senior League Division Softball Special Games and Big League Division Softball Special Games.

Failure to administer the Special Games guidelines as outlined is subject to review and suspension of charter or tournament privileges by the Charter Committee or Tournament Committee in Williamsport.

Additionally, leagues and districts must complete the proper Special Games Request Form as set forth by Regulation IX. Special Game Forms are available at [http://www.littleleague.org/Assets/forms\\_pubs/App\\_SpecialGames.pdf](http://www.littleleague.org/Assets/forms_pubs/App_SpecialGames.pdf) or [http://www.littleleague.org/Assets/forms\\_pubs/App\\_SpecialGames\\_nonll.pdf](http://www.littleleague.org/Assets/forms_pubs/App_SpecialGames_nonll.pdf).

## Expanded Special Games for Softball – 2009 Guidelines

### Minor League Division Softball

The following rules are based on a two (2) or three (3) day Special Games tournament. Special Games under these guidelines must be approved by the regional office as set forth by Regulation IX.

- Each Minor Division in a league is limited to two (2) Special Games tournaments under these amended pitching rules prior to the league's first Tournament game within the Minor Division.
- Teams participating in these Special Games during the regular season shall be composed of players from no more than two regular season teams from the Minor Division within the league or interleague.
- In accordance with Little League Regulation XI, no admission fee may be charged to any Minor League Special Game. Voluntary contributions are permitted.
- Doubleheaders may be played on Saturday and Sunday without affecting the teams' Regular Season play, other than the pitching guidelines noted below.
- Minor Division teams may not play more than two games in a day.
- Tournament Directors have the option to impose a time limit on games if necessary due to the number of teams participating, limited playing space, etc.
- A player may pitch a maximum of nine (9) innings during the Special Games tournament. This will not affect a player's regular season pitching status for the previous or following week, **provided they have a day of rest before and after pitching in the tournament.**
- If a player pitches less than seven (7) innings in any day, no rest is required. If a player pitches seven (7) or more innings in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed. Delivery of a single pitch constitutes having pitched an inning.
- Mandatory Play - Every player on the Special Games roster present at the start of the game shall participate in each game for a minimum of three (3) consecutive defensive outs and bat at least one (1) time. There is no exception to this rule unless the game is shortened for any reason other than a time limit that has been established by the Tournament Director prior to the start of the tournament.
- Only regular season managers and coaches from the one or both teams are allowed.

## Expanded Special Games for Softball – 2009 Guidelines

### Major League Division Softball

The following rules are based on a two (2) or three (3) day Special Games tournament. Special Games under these guidelines must be approved by the regional office as set forth by Regulation IX.

- Each Major Division in a league is limited to two Special Games tournaments under these amended pitching rules prior to the league's first Tournament game within the Major Division.
- Teams participating in these Special Games during the regular season shall be composed of players from no more than two regular season teams from the Major division within the league or interleague.
- In accordance with Little League Regulation XI, no admission fee may be charged to any Little League (Major) Division Game. Voluntary contributions are permitted.
- Doubleheaders may be played on Saturday and Sunday without affecting the teams' Regular Season play, other than the pitching guidelines noted below.
- Major Division teams may not play more than three games in a day.
- Tournament Directors have the option to impose a time limit on games if necessary due to the number of teams participating, limited playing space, etc.
- Tournament Directors have the option to implement the following playing rules:
  - Dropped Third Strike – The batter becomes a runner when the catcher fails to catch the third strike before the ball touches the ground when there are less than two outs and first base is unoccupied, or anytime there are two outs.
  - Leaving the Base on Pitcher's Release – Runners may leave their entitled base after the pitcher has released the ball.
- A player may pitch a maximum of twenty (20) innings in the tournament but may not pitch more than twelve (12) innings in a day. This will not affect a player's regular season pitching status for the previous or following week, **provided they have a day of rest before and after pitching in the tournament.**
- Major Division: If a player pitches less than ten (10) innings in any day, no rest is required. If a player pitches ten (10) or more innings in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed. Delivery of a single pitch constitutes having pitched an inning.
- Mandatory Play - Every player on the Special Games roster present at the start of the game shall participate in each game for a minimum of three (3) consecutive defensive outs and bat at least one (1) time. There is no exception to this rule unless the game is shortened for any reason other than a time limit that has been established by the Tournament Director prior to the start of the tournament.
- Only regular season managers and coaches from the one or both teams are allowed.

## Expanded Special Games for Softball – 2009 Guidelines

### Junior/Senior League Division Softball

The following rules are based on a two (2) or three (3) day Special Games tournament. Special Games under these rules must be approved by the regional office as set forth by Regulation IX.

- Each Junior/Senior Division in a league is limited to two Special Games tournaments under these amended pitching rules prior to the league's first Tournament game.
- Leagues or leagues combined through interleague play may submit teams to participate in these Special Games. Teams must be composed of regular season players within the Junior or Senior programs in their respective division.
- In accordance with Little League Regulation XI, an admission charge is permitted.
- Teams may not play more than three games in a day.
- Tournament Directors have the option to impose a time limit on games if necessary due to the number of teams participating, limited playing space, etc.
- Tournament Directors have the option to implement the following playing rule:
  - Courtesy Runner – Any player not currently in the batting order may replace the current pitcher or catcher as a courtesy runner at any time after they safely reach base. The pitcher or catcher may remain in the game and the courtesy runner will retain all substitution rights (if the courtesy runner has substitution rights). The same player may not be used as a courtesy runner for both the pitcher and the catcher positions.
- A player may pitch a maximum of thirty (30) innings during the Special Games tournament but may not pitch in more than fourteen (14) innings in a day. This will not affect a player's regular season pitching status of the previous or following week, **provided they have a day of rest before and after pitching in the tournament.**
- If a pitcher pitches less than twelve (12) innings in any day, no rest is required. If a player pitches twelve (12) or more innings in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed. Delivery of a single pitch constitutes having pitched an inning.
- Mandatory Play – Junior Division: Every player on a Special Games roster present at the start of the game shall participate in each game for a minimum of three (3) consecutive defensive outs and bat at least one (1) time. There is no exception to this rule unless the game is shortened for any reason other than a time limit that has been established by the Tournament Director prior to the start of the tournament. (**NOTE** – Senior Division: Mandatory Play does not apply.)
- Only regular season managers and coaches from within the respective divisions are eligible to coach.
- A player may count the games in which he/she participates from one (1) Special Games tournament toward his/her 60 percent participation requirement for Tournament eligibility.

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### Big League Division Softball

The following rules are based on a two (2) or three (3) day Special Games tournament. Special Games under these rules must be approved by the regional office as set forth by Regulation IX.

- Each Big League is limited to two Special Games tournaments under these amended pitching rules prior to the league's first Big League Tournament game.
- Leagues or leagues combined through inter-league play may submit teams to participate in these Special Games. Teams must be composed of regular season players from within the Big League programs.
- In accordance with Little League Regulation XI, an admission charge is permitted.
- Teams may not play more than three games in a day.
- Tournament Directors have the option to impose a time limit on games if necessary due to the number of teams participating, limited playing space, etc.
- Tournament Directors have the option to implement the following playing rule:
  - Courtesy Runner – Any player not currently in the batting order may replace the current pitcher or catcher as a courtesy runner at any time after they safely reach base. The pitcher or catcher may remain in the game and the courtesy runner will retain all substitution rights (if the courtesy runner has substitution rights). The same player may not be used as a courtesy runner for both the pitcher and the catcher positions. The courtesy runner is not permitted to be used if there is a designated hitter being used for the pitcher or catcher.
- A player may pitch a maximum of thirty (30) innings during the Special Games tournament but may not pitch in more than fourteen (14) innings in a day. This will not affect a player's regular season pitching status of the previous or following week, **provided they have a day of rest before and after pitching in the tournament.**
- If a pitcher pitches less than twelve (12) innings in any day, no rest is required. If a player pitches twelve (12) or more innings in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed. Delivery of a single pitch constitutes having pitched an inning.
- Only regular season managers and coaches from the Big League division are eligible to coach.
- A player may count being listed on the roster for Special Games tournaments toward his/her 60 percent requirement for Tournament eligibility.

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