



# Northwest Seattle Little League

*Respect the game.*

## Introduction to NWSLL AAA BASEBALL (new for 2015)

For the 2015 season, Northwest Seattle Little League has modified our Baseball Divisions to comply with the standards set by the other leagues in our district. This decision was made in an attempt to not only make NWSLL more competitive, but will also give each of our kid pitch divisions more opportunities to play "INTERLEAGUE" games versus teams from other leagues.

New to our League are the AA and AAA divisions. AA will be mainly for 8-9 year olds as a "first year kid pitch" division, and AAA will replace our MINORS division and will include 9, 10, and 11 year olds.

### Below are some answers to some frequently asked questions:

#### **What are the differences between the "new" AAA division and the MINORS division from previous seasons?**

The AAA division, a new division starting this season, is essentially the same as what used to be called MINORS, with a few changes. AAA Baseball will include primarily 9, 10 and 11 year olds (Minors in the past had mainly 9 and 10 year olds) and players will be placed in specific divisions based on skills, experience and how they perform and player evaluations. In addition, as neighboring leagues all have a similar AAA division, it will allow more interleague play for Northwest's AAA teams.

#### **In which division will 12 year olds play?**

Similar to previous years, all 12 year olds will play in MAJORS. An exception to this rule may apply in cases where safety may be concerned.

#### **In which division will 11 year olds play?**

In 2015, 11 year olds will play in either AAA or MAJORS, based on the best fit for each player (each player will be evaluated at Player Assessments which will take place in February.)

#### **In which division will 10 year olds play?**

10 year olds will play in AAA, but similar to previous years, one or more 10 year olds may be asked to play up to MAJORS. This will be based on individual ability/experience per player assessment and by approval of the division coordinator, league president and player's family.

#### **Here is a basic overview of how each age group will be considered:**

- 12 year olds will play MAJORS (with the exception of any situations deemed a safety risk).
  - 12 year olds will be evaluated at NWSLL's player evaluations.
  - Majors teams will be assembled by way of a draft process by division coaches.
- All 11 year olds will be evaluated at NWSLL's "Player Evaluations" in February.
  - Some 11 year olds will be placed MAJORS based not only on evaluations and experience in previous seasons and preseason training.
  - Some 11 year olds will play in AAA baseball with 9,10 and 11 year olds.
  - 11 year olds can choose to not play in MAJORS if they prefer to play in AAA Baseball.
  - AAA teams will be assembled by way of a draft process by division coaches.
- All 10 year olds will be evaluated at NWSLL's "Player Evaluations" in February.
  - Most 10 year olds will be placed in AAA to play with 9, 10 and 11 year olds.
  - On rare occasions, 10 year olds may play up in Majors, based on skill and experience (and how many players are needed to fill out teams.)
- All 9 year olds will be evaluated at NWSLL's "Player Evaluations" in February.
  - Most 9 year olds will be placed in AA (First year Kid Pitch) to play with 8 and 9 year olds.
  - Some 9 year olds will be asked to play AAA, based on skill and experience (and how many players are needed to fill out teams.)
  - AA teams will be built based on previous season's team roster, player requests, and with priority placed on "parity" between all teams (no stacked teams).
- All 7 and 8 year olds who wish to play in AA (first year kid pitch) must be evaluated at NWSLL's "Player Evaluations" in February.
  - Some 8 year olds will be placed in AA (First year Kid Pitch) to play with 8 and 9 year olds.
  - Some 8 year olds may wish to play in ROOKIES (Coach pitch) if they are not ready for kid pitch baseball.
- Any 7 or 8 year olds who do not participate in Evaluations will be placed in Rookies (Coach Pitch).
- Five and Six year olds will play in Tee Ball.

#### **Who can participate in AAA?**

Nine year olds must have played in either 8/9 year old Summer Ball (kid pitch) or be confirmed through the Division Player Agent/coordinator to allow player to attend the AAA player assessment session. The Division Player Agent has the authority to ensure the best interests of the child are served.

### **What is the skill level in AAA?**

The Minors program progresses the game to the next level of play (between AA and MAJORS) in the context of having fun, making friends, and learning positive life lessons. The league continues its focus on providing a developmental environment and a focus on learning about the game of baseball with an increased focus on skill development. This division is considered developmental but includes more competitive attributes than the lower divisions, including:

- Kids are pitching
- Standard "3 out" baseball
- Little League ("hard") baseball is used
- Score is kept
- Games are umpired
- Division standings are kept
- Some "Interleague" games will probably be scheduled (with AAA division teams from Ballard, Richmond, North Central and other local Leagues)
- There is a postseason tournament for all teams
- Teams are composed through a draft process
- Players are required to attend a low pressure preseason player assessment

### **To help maintain a healthy balance in the AAA division:**

- There are minimum play rules that mandate all players will play a minimum of 2 innings and 1 at bat.
- The league expects that coaches will play every player a minimum of 3 innings and 2 at bats (half of each game) but ideally every player will play equally (including infield and outfield positions if possible.)
- All players are in the batting line up for the entire game (continuous batting order.)

### **What is the time commitment?**

The Minors program is 3 days a week, generally two weekdays and Saturday. Practices are scheduled for 60 to 90 minutes between 4:00 and 7:30 PM on weekdays and in mornings or afternoons on some Saturdays. The game schedule takes place from April to early June and is typically one weekday game and one Saturday game each week. NWSLL will try to arrange some Interleague games (with AAA teams from other leagues) which will take place on Saturdays in May. The regular season is followed by a double elimination tournament.

### **How are teams decided?**

All kids ages 10 through 12 (and 9 year olds granted permission to "play up") attend a player assessment session. These sessions and past experience are the basis for drafting teams onto AAA and MAJORS teams. The goal of the league is to have strong parity within divisions to provide a balanced competitive landscape in an effort to optimize the experience for the most kids. Some players who are "on the cusp" of each division may be asked to play up (with family permission) in an effort to fill team rosters. It is ideal to have 12 players per roster.

### **Can a child who has never played baseball before start at age 9, 10, 11, or 12?**

Absolutely. Northwest Seattle Little League is here to provide a great experience for kids of all abilities.

### **What equipment do players need to play AAA?**

AAA players need only bring a baseball glove and athletic clothing for practices including cleats (soccer cleats are OK). For games, every player is issued a uniform jersey, belt and cap (players keep the cap), but each player is expected to provide his/her own baseball pants, belt and socks. Boys are required to wear a cup.

### **How do I sign my child up?**

You can sign up online by going to the registration page on the website. Deadline is January 31.

### **Can my child be on the same team as his/her friends?**

Because players are assigned through a draft system the league is unable to honor family requests. The league's resource for parents with concerns or extenuating circumstances to be considered should contact the division Player Agent/coordinator whose role is to consider the best interests of the players in the context of league policies.

### **When will we find out which team our child is on?**

You will hear from your coach typically by late February.

### **When do practices begin?**

Practices are tentatively scheduled to begin in early March.

### Where are practices and games?

All practices and games take place at a local field including Soundview, Northacres, with some interleague games being played in other local leagues' fields (like Shoreview and Hamlin (Shoreline), Gilman (Ballard), Lower Woodland (Greenlake), Maple Leaf, etc.)

### When do games begin?

Games are tentatively scheduled to begin the second week of April. Formal game schedules will be published by the end of March. .

### Are scholarships available?

Yes. Northwest Seattle Little League is committed to the principle that EVERY child who wants to play baseball WILL be offered the opportunity to play, regardless of their family's financial status. Check the appropriate box while registering if you would like a scholarship.

### What makes Minors different from "real" baseball?

Minors has modifications to ensure it is based on fun, learning, and safety, including:

- Entire roster is in batting lineup
- Maximum 5 runs per inning (except in last inning) and 10 run "mercy rule" after Four innings.
- Minimum play rules
- Pitch limit rules
- No "Drop Third Strike" rule

### Does Northwest Seattle Little League provide transportation to games or practices?

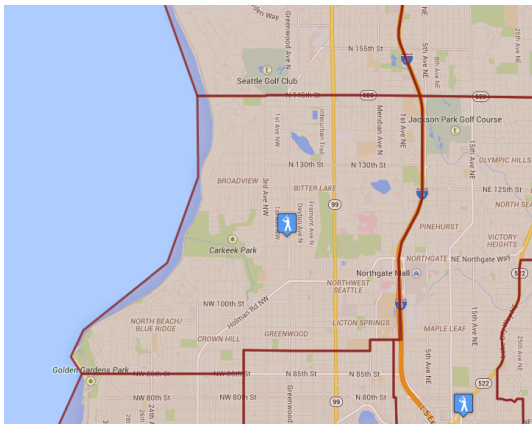
No, but families can arrange car pools to and from games and practices.

### What if my child has schedule conflicts and misses games or practices?

We expect that there will be scheduling conflicts at times and you do not need to worry that this will affect your child's situation.

### Are scholarships available?

Yes. NWSLL is committed to the principle that "EVERY child that wants to play baseball WILL PLAY" regardless of their family's financial status. Check the appropriate box while registering if you would like a scholarship.



### Is Northwest Seattle Little League your league?

Little League is very specific about keeping to predefined geographic areas.

NWSLL's boundaries are:

- North boundary: North 145<sup>th</sup> Street
- East boundary: Interstate 5
- West boundary: Puget Sound
- South boundary:
  - NW 85<sup>th</sup> (from the water to 8<sup>th</sup> Ave NW)
  - N 90<sup>th</sup> (between 8<sup>th</sup> and Wallingford)
  - N 92<sup>nd</sup> (between Wallingford and I-5)

<http://www.littleleaguewa.org/boundary-maps/district-8-boundaries>

### League Parent Resources

Any topic: [info@nwsll.org](mailto:info@nwsll.org) (goes to league administrator)

Registration: Sue Schoolcraft, NWSLL Registrar [nwsllregistrar@gmail.com](mailto:nwsllregistrar@gmail.com)

Division Commissioners: (will handle questions for each division)

- Baseball Juniors, Seniors, Big League:
- Baseball Majors:
- Baseball AAA: Derek Davis
- Baseball Rookies/Tee Ball: Dave Terhark