



7th Inning Stretch

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This Month's Newsletter

Hope you are all enjoying the crazy weather we are having right across the country. In some places you can almost play baseball or golf already. In other areas the weather has been up and down like a yo-yo, with temperatures above zero for a few days and back down to our typical freezing temperatures for the next few. Well...baseball IS around the corner for all of us, and if it's anything like my District, the buzz is already well under way about the new season.

If you have any info about your League or District...please pass it on so that the rest of the country can see what you're up to.

Please remember to try to get anything you can to me by as close to the end of the month as possible, as I put out the new issue on the 1st of every month.

Thanks for taking the time to read this and every issue.

Bob Taunton, btaunton@littleleague.ca

District Administrator

Ontario Little League District 7

The Road To The World Series (or how we got there)...

Thanks to Gord Crookston, President of Orleans Little League in Ontario District 6 for submitting this story on the road to victory for his Junior Division Canadian Champions.

In Glace Bay NS, on the afternoon of August eleventh, the Orleans Junior (ages 13-14) Red Sox team won the Canadian Junior League Championship by defeating the host team, the Glace Bay Miners, by a score of 15 to 13. With this win, the Red Sox advanced to the Little League Junior World Series, which was held from Aug 14 to 20 in Taylor Michigan.

Heading into the Junior League provincial championships in July, the Red Sox had finished as runners up the last four years. That all changed on July 29 when they beat the East Nepean Eagles 8-6 behind the pitching of Brett Sabourin to earn a berth in the Canadian championships in Sydney, Nova Scotia.

Once in Nova Scotia, the Red Sox miraculously made it into the championship game after finishing fourth in the round robin. The

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championship game was a wild affair with Glace Bay taking an early 5-0 lead in front of a partisan hometown crowd. Like the consummate fighters they are, the Red Sox closed the gap to within one run before Glace Bay scored eight more runs to extend their lead to 13-4. Refusing to give up, the spunky Red Sox scored six runs in the bottom of fourth inning and then four more runs in the bottom of the fifth capped by a two run blast by Sabourin to take a 14-13 lead. Orleans would add an insurance marker in the fifth and Alex Poulin would pitch all seven innings to pick up the win in one of the gutsier performances of the tournament.

At the Junior League World Series in Taylor, Michigan they won their first two games and eventually finished in third place in the International pool, which ties the best ever showing by a Canadian team at the Junior League World Series.

In summation, this team displayed tremendous ability in winning the Canadian Junior League Championship and then conducted themselves with tact and professionalism on the international stage.

This is the third time a team from Orleans Little League has won a Canadian Championship. The Orleans Red Sox were the Canadian Junior Champions in 1992 and Canadian Senior Champions in 1995.

Since their return, the team has been given a reception and recognition at Council by the City of Ottawa, received a certificate of achievement from our MP Marc Godbout, was awarded an Orleans Outstanding Youth Award, and will be recognized at the 53rd Annual Ottawa Sports Awards dinner in late January.

Check out the [Orleans Little League](#) Web Page.



**Orleans Little League Junior Red Sox
2005 Provincial and Canadian Champs !!!**

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Little League Pledge:

I trust in God
I love my country
And will respect it's laws
I will play fair
And strive to win
But win or lose
I will always
Do my best

The Little League Parent / Volunteer Pledge:

I will teach all children to play
fair and do their best
I will positively support all
managers, coaches and players
I will respect the decisions of
the umpires
I will praise a good effort
despite the outcome of the
game

Brain Teaser

- 1- The batter bunts the ball in front of home plate and busts down the first base line. The batter – runner is running on the inside of the foul line approximately 40 feet from 1st base when the catcher's throw hits him / her in the back. The Umpire should call the runner out for interfering with the 1st baseman taking the throw. **True or False**
- 2- From the windup position the pitcher may not throw to a base in an attempt to pick off a runner while in contact with the pitcher's plate. **True or False**

Answers at the end of the newsletter.

Fielding Ground Ball Progression For Players 5-8 Years

Taken From "The Coach's Box", a new Little League International newsletter dedicated to Little League Managers and Coaches

by al and AL (Al Herback and Al Price)

First, please recognize you are working with young players just starting out, with wide variety of different attitudes, motivation, experience and skill level.

Second, you must build safety and organization into every part of your practice.

Third, remember players improve the most when they are active trying out what you want them to learn.

Fourth, be patient with each player and be positive with them every chance you get.

Fifth, find a creative way to break down the skill so each player on your team finds success.

Finally, and most importantly, they need to have fun. Your job is to help each and every player on your team develop a passion for the game

We suggest that you apply this little checklist to introducing the skill of "Fielding a Ground Ball."

Ground Ball – "Ready Position"

Have the players stand side by side on the edge of the infield grass arms distance apart and introduce the basic infield stance. Legs wide, bum sticking out, hands out front and low, head up, eyes on the ball. We call this ready position "alligator" because we want players to take a low stance with two hands out front in an alligator type position.

Ground Ball Practice – Fun Repetitions

Organize your team into four lines of three players. Mark a spot on the infield dirt at each of the 4 infield positions. Have a coach or parent helper stand five to six steps out



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in front of each line. Have the first player in each line to get ready to field the ground ball by calling out "Ready" or "Alligator."

Initially have the players take off their gloves and set them aside. Then softly roll an oversized ball to the player at the front of each line. Each player fields the ball with two hands, tosses it back to the coach and then circles around to the back of their line. This is a great way to safely introduce fielding with two hands. Keep them going for two to three minutes so each player gets several chances to be successful.

Then, have the players put on their gloves and repeat the drill using a regular sized baseball. If you have soft baseballs in your equipment bag, start with them. Then introduce the ball that you will use in games. Make sure the four coaches are only a short distance away and are rolling the ball underhand softly. The goal at this point in the progression is to get as many repetitions as possible reinforcing the basic technique and help players develop confidence.

As the players gain more confidence during the year, organize the drill with the coaches at each station back at a position closer to game distance.

As a coach, your goal should be to provide each player with 40-50 ground ball chances in the 10-15 minutes that you have set aside in each practice. Using this approach it is easy to accomplish this objective and, over the course of 10 practices, you have provided each player 400-500 repetitions on this very important & challenging skill.

Of course you will need to mix in hitting some ground balls during your practice but we recommend you give all players 40-50 repetitions using the above approach first.

This progression was developed by Al Herback and Al Price; Authors and Instructors of the Little League Education Program for Managers & Coaches. Fielding ground balls along with other skills, drills, fun activities along with tips on how to plan a practice can be found in the "Getting Started" Training Series. This series includes a manual for coaches, instructional booklets for players & a new Getting Started DVD. Please go to www.alandalbaseball.com for more information on the program & to order your own set of Training Materials.

How Do You Want To Be Remembered

Taken From "The Coach's Box", a new Little League International newsletter dedicated to Little League Managers and Coaches

***By Nicholas Caringi
Director of Operations
Little League International***

My experiences as a player in Little League are memories that are "priceless" to quote a popular credit card advertisement. But let's examine why.

Here is what I don't remember:

I don't remember how many hits, home runs, (probably not many) wins, loses, strikeouts, league championships, all star wins or loses. For whatever reason, these just must not be important enough to remember.

Here is what I do remember:

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I remember how it felt when our phone rang and the coach informed my dad that I was drafted to be a member of the Bastian Tires team. I remember the feeling I had when I first put the uniform on. I remember our coach rewarding us with a snow cone if we committed fewer than four errors in a game, regardless of whether we won or lost.

I remember my all star coaches, Mr. Cioffi and Mr. Hieber, who put so much time in working with us as kids that we often forgot we played baseball. We seemed to gel as friends first that happened to play on the same team. Mr. Cioffi's practices were filled with interesting, fun drills that reinforced sound fundamentals.

My point is that too often people get caught up in the winning and losing of games and often lose sight of why they are there. Staying true to reason adults volunteer for the children of their community is most important. The reason should be to provide a safe fun atmosphere for kids to learn and grow as individuals. Learning how teamwork and dedication can help them accomplish any goals that they set for themselves.

I now see Mr. Cioffi from time to time as he is a volunteer team host at our Little League World Series as well as my daughter's third grade teacher. Visiting with him reminds me about all that is good about Little League and how much of an impression he has made on me as a child that carried through to adulthood.

Now, let's get back to my original question. How do you want to be remembered?

Wouldn't it be nice to have one of your former players approach you with their son or daughter and say "Let me introduce you to my Little League coach!"

Electronic Rule Books Now Include Video Demonstrations

From Little Leaguer Newsletter

Last year, Little League International introduced a new way to access baseball and softball regulations, playing rules and tournament rules through the Little League E-Rules CD.

The electronic rulebooks allow users to search the rules electronically, making it easier and faster than ever for district and league officials, managers, umpires and others to find the information they need.

This year, for the first time, there are 11 video demonstrations on the CD. As you look through the books, certain rules will include a movie camera icon. You simply click on the icon, and a short movie will play that explains the rule in action.

A sample of one of the rules is on this page. The rule depicted deals with obstruction by the defense when a play is not being made on the runner. Keep in mind that the video resolution of the rule on your E-Rules CD will be much sharper.

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Each video is between 90 seconds and three minutes long, and will play on most PCs. Since the video is on the CD itself, there are no bandwidth worries.

Using Adobe® Reader® technology, E-rules are available from the Little League Store for just \$10 per CD. The CD provides access to baseball rules in English and French; softball rules in English and French, the Little League Operating Manual in English, and "A Year in the Life of Hometown Little League" in English.

E-rules are not printable, nor are they transferable. The user must have the CD in the computer to be able to view the text and/or search for keywords.

Just like the printed rulebooks, the E-Rules expire at the end of the year, when Little League issues updated rulebooks for the coming season. As with printed rulebooks, the Little League E-Rules are available only to those authorized to purchase them by the district or local Little League. (Must have district or league ID number.) District administrators worldwide will each receive one free E-Rules CD.

To order a CD of Little League E-rules, call the Little League Store toll-free at 800-874-2852 and ask for item No. 130 or logon to the Little League Data Center and order online.

Blue's Corner...by Andy O'Brien

Andy will be back next month.

Reminders

The 2006 League information and charter application material you will need to register your league was mailed to your District Administrator in mid December.

It is recommended that you submit your charter in early February or March. If you are not sure of the exact number of teams you will charter, you can estimate the number of teams and then send a correction later, once your teams are set.

Once your charter application is submitted to Canadian Headquarters, we will send you rule books, umpire manuals, coaching material and other materials that will assist your league during the coming season.

The new League Age Determination Date goes into effect in 2006. The league age determination date in all divisions of Little League Baseball will be April 30 of the current year/season. The date in all divisions of Little League Softball will be Dec. 31 of the previous year.

For further assistance, please go to the Little League International web site to use the calculator to determine the "league age" of a participant or candidate at: <http://www.littleleague.org/leagueage/>

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You can also print out a chart for determining the league age of your players at: <http://www.littleleague.org/leagueofficials/forms.asp>

If you have any questions please feel free to contact: Marthe Dubroy at (613)731-3301, or by fax (613)731-2829, or email: mdubroy@littleleague.org

Best wishes for a successful season!

Marthe Dubroy
Canadian Coordinator
Little League Baseball Canada

Little League Offering Official Uniforms For The First Time

WILLIAMSPORT, Pa. (Jan. 24, 2006) – Custom uniforms are now available from Little League International!

For the first time in its 67-year history, Little League Baseball and Softball Official Uniforms are being offered to leagues in high quality, at great prices and with excellent delivery service through Little League International and our partners, XP Apparel.

Four different uniform designs are available for baseball, Challenger and Tee-ball teams. T-shirt and sleeveless jersey options are available for softball.

All uniforms may be ordered in a choice of three different lettering options and in any combination of eight colors. Matching caps, socks and visors are available including embroidery on all caps. Each cap carries the registered licensing logo of Little League. Leagues will have the option of either gray or white pants.

All uniforms will be delivered with the Little League Official Patch already sewn in place!

Before you consider ordering your new league uniforms for 2006, go to www.LLBUiforms.com and see the difference in price, quality and delivery. For ordering information on the new line of uniforms being offered by Little League, go on-line to www.LLBUiforms.com or call 1-800-481-0438. Won't your players want to wear Little League Official Uniforms this year?

See the attached brochure for the Little League Uniforms at the end of this newsletter.

Answer to Brain Teaser: 1- False. Rule 7.09(k) – The batter – runners requirement to be in the running lane starts at 30 feet from home plate. In this case the batter – runner had not violated the rule.

2- False. Rule 8.01(a)(2) – From the windup position the pitcher may attempt a pick off move if he / she steps directly with his / her pivot foot toward the base before throwing and “as long as he / she does not begin any natural pitching motion.”

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- GOLD
- ROYAL
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- BLACK
- GREY
- PURPLE
- WHITE

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BLOCK ARCH

OLD STYLE

Tailsweep

Back Numbers

15

12345

67890

white ink standard

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 - GOLD
 - ROYAL
 - GREEN
 - BLACK
 - GREY
 - PURPLE

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Pants

- GREY
- WHITE



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