

The 7th Inning Stretch

LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL CANADA

PEARL OF AFRICA SERIES GETS SOME HELP FROM ORLEANS LITTLE LEAGUE

Courtesy of Brian Egert, Public Relations, Orleans Little League, D6, Ontario



Orleans Little League Baseball (OLLB) is on the baseball field in January!

The field happens to be in Mpigi, Uganda. In cooperation with the Pearl of Africa series, OLLB has generously donated the time and resources of one of their members to travel to the ball field in Uganda and provide some labour and on field instruction for the Uganda Little League.

Mr Chuck Dufton, the OLLB Umpire Consultant will travel to Uganda in January 2012 to assist the Uganda Little League by providing some baseball instruction and a series of umpire clinics.

Mrs Ruth Hoffman from Langley BC is a driving force behind the Pearl of Africa series, a series of baseball clinics and games between the 2011 Canadian Little League champions from Langley and the Ugandan (Europe) Little League champions. They will be competing in a series of games that did not happen last year because of visa issues. *Chuck will be calling the game with the crew of umpires from Canada and Uganda.*

- Rogers SportsNet, ESPN and of course Jay Shapiro will all be there to document the week of activities on and off the field.
- MLB players Jimmy Rollins and Derrek Lee are coming with members of their families
- The legacy projects will support the Ugandan baseball program for years to come. Including amounts received and promised, we have raised over \$125,000. We only need another \$30,000 to fund the educational scholarship goal .

For more information on this series go to <http://righttoplay.akaraisin.com/youthbaseball>.

Other information on Uganda Little League including their hopes for the future can be found on their website - <http://ugandalittleleaguebaseball.org>.

Articles on Jimmy Rollins participation: <http://www.theprovince.com/sports/Rollins+joins+little+leaguers+change+lives/5897633/story.html>

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Remember...If it isn't fun...it isn't Little League!

TEACHING FOR TOMORROW LITTLE LEAGUE EDUCATION PROGRAM

Article by Al Herback - National Coach - Little League Baseball Canada

Umpire Quiz

Happy New Year everyone, with hopes that all your wishes and dreams for 2012 become reality. As I was beginning to write this article, my thought was to ease all potential Little League volunteers into thinking baseball while the snow is still very prominent in most areas of Canada for another few months.

Umpires played a major role in the September newsletter and will be discussed in this article as well. While going through some papers, I found a very basic umpire quiz that I would like to share with you. In Little League baseball from the Majors down, there are only a few rules that may cause a bit of controversy within a game. It is our hope that everyone involved from the managers through to the parents will consider not only the difficult task of the umpires, but the age of many members of the "blue" team. There are hundreds of umpires being trained who are as young as eleven, twelve, thirteen and fourteen. Some of these volunteers may still be actively playing and do this important job on their off days which shows a tremendous commitment.

What we all must realize is that there



is only a weekend of training and little opportunity for any of these young people to have an extended period of time to study the rule book. The sessions attended would give them the basics such as where to position in different situations, basic strike and ball calls and personal preparation to do the best job possible. A couple of things we can do to help on a questionable call would be to relax, call time and, with our knowledge of the game, discuss the situation to help these kids learn from our experience.

Usually we try to have one veteran umpire on the field to help in situations, but we have seen many games where two young players would be covering the field and home plate. It is our hope that managers and coaches would make this a great learning experience for these up and coming members of our baseball program. We desperately need their services and with your input we can guide them through many trying situations throughout the year. For players who may not want to continue their playing career, this is a great alternative to remain an integral part of one of the world's outstanding games. Sadly enough, some parents are not allowing their child to continue the following year because of the negative reactions to situations by a minority of managers, coaches, or spectators. They feel at this age they should not be

subjected to this type of intimidation by anyone involved in the program. Let's all try harder for a positive experience for these special volunteers in 2012.

The 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

See how you do on the quiz. I could give you the answers but I think it would be more beneficial if you have any that may be questionable, to ask a friend or check the rule book. There are no trick questions and many are normal situations within Little League games.

These may seem quite elementary for you but remember that in many cases we are working with inexperienced umpires.

1. A batted ball lands in foul territory between home and first then rolls fair before reaching the base. Is this a fair or foul ball?
2. The first base runner is off with the pitch which was bunted by the batter. On the way to first base, the batter runs into the ball in fair territory and reaches first base. The runner ends up on third base. Is the batter out? What happens to the runner?
3. A runner on third advances toward home plate. The catcher, waiting for the ball, blocks the sliding runner from reaching the plate. The catcher, upon receiving the ball,

- tags the runner. Should the runner be called out?
4. A runner is on first base with two strikes on the batter. The batter swings at the next pitch, misses, but is hit by the ball. Should the batter be called out?
 5. A runner is on first with one out and one strike on the batter. The batter swings and misses at the next pitch, but is hit by the ball which rolls away from the catcher. The runner advances to second base. Should the runner be returned to first?
 6. Immediately after catching a fly ball, the center fielder collides with the left fielder causing the ball to be dropped. Is the batter safe?
 7. With runners on first and second and a fly ball caught by the right fielder, both runners end up at second base. The second baseman tags both runners. Which of the two shall the umpire call out?
 8. A runner breaks from his normal path of travel to avoid a player fielding a fair batted ball. Should the umpire declare the runner out?
 9. A shortstop is standing in the base path and not fielding a batted ball. The runner advancing from second falls over the shortstop and is tagged out at the base by the third baseman who received the throw. Is the runner out or safe?
 10. With runners on first and third bases and no one out, a batter hits an infield fly which is dropped by the fielder. Should the batter be called out?
 11. Runners are on second and third with two outs. The batter hits a double but is tagged out attempting to stretch the hit into a triple. The runner on second base clearly left too soon on the pitch. How many runs count? If a runner leaves a base early on any pitch, is the runner called out?
 12. A batter hits out of order and reaches first base safely. An appeal is made by the opposing coach before another pitch is delivered. Should the batter/runner be called out?
 13. A player in the batter's box is hit by his own batted ball. Should the umpire rule the batter out?
 14. Line-ups are given to the umpire, but before play begins the home team manager has changed his shortstop. Is this permissible?
 15. With bases full and no outs, the batter hits an infield fly called by the umpire. Without the fielder touching the ball, the ball bounces and hits the runner at second who is standing off the base. Should the umpire rule both the batter and the runner out? Does the infield fly rule apply to a bunted pop-up?

Let's think about the upcoming season even as early as January. Keep baseball in the hands of the players along with our upcoming and so desperately needed young and enthusiastic umpires. Fun is the name of the game whether it be as a manager, coach, player, umpire or parent. Working together will bring many rewards for everyone! Let's not turn them away but show them the way!

If for any reason you wish to contact me, please call 403-273-4656 or email al.herback@gmail.com.

TEACHING FOR TOMORROW LITTLE LEAGUE EDUCATION PROGRAM CLINIC DATES FOR 2012

Date	District	Location	Contact	Number	E-mail
February 11 & 12	ON D5	Windsor	Kathy Recchia	519-973-3196	kathyh@cogeco.ca
March 25	AB D4	Medicine Hat	Lovell McDonnel	403-548-5990	mcdonnel@memlane.com
March 27 & 28	AB D3	Chestermere	Vicki Klinger	403- 272-7170	recreation@chestermercra.com
March 30 & 31	BC D3	Langley	Linda Hanson	604-240-8970	linda.hanson@telus.net
April 1 & 2	BC D7	Victoria	Al Jansen	250-385-7378	aljansen@telus.net
April 3 & 4	BC D1	Vancouver	Steve Gustavson	604-612-3298	sgustavson@littleleague.ca
April 5	BC D8	Trail	DJ Ashman	250-364-3888	djashman@amford.com
April 11 & 12	AB D2	Edmonton	Glen Gregory	780-446-8383	gsgregory@shaw.ca
April 14	AB D1	Lethbridge	Kevin Kvame	403-315-4064	kevin@bullsbbaseball.com
April 16 & 17	SK D1	Regina	Anna & Rick Burton	306-545-9296	rick.annaburton@sasktel.net
April 20 & 21	ON D2 ON D6	Ottawa	Bill Magnus Jim Dean	613-851-7126 613-723-0810	magnbil@rogers.com jimdean@littleleague.ca
April 22	ON D1	Mississauga	Anne Dundon	416-727-4754	adundon@rogers.com
April 24 & May 1	AB D8	Calgary	Dave Stevens	403-613-4217	d.stevens@shaw.ca
April 26	AB D3	Calgary	Doug Stevens	403-295-3366	da@albertadistrict3.com
May 12	NB D1	Saint John	Victor Fitzgerald	506-672-5652	v.fitzgerald@bellaliant.net

LITTLE LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL ANNOUNCES BAT RULES CHANGES FOR 2012 SEASON

By Communications Division
SOUTH WILLIAMSPORT, Pa.
November 2, 2011

In an effort to provide timely information on bat rules, Little League International today announced the bat specifications and standards for the 2012 season.

Here are the highlights, followed by the actual text of the 2012 baseball bat rules:

For the Little League Major Baseball Division and below: The moratorium on composite-barreled baseball bats remains in effect. However, some composite-barreled baseball bats that have been proven in laboratory testing to meet the BPF (Bat Performance Factor) standard throughout the life of the bat, through the Accelerated Break-In (ABI) process, have received waivers. That list is here: [Licensed/Approved Composite 2 1/4 Bats](#).

Note that in the Little League Majors Baseball Division and below, there is no limit on the "drop" weight of any bat.

- **For Junior League Baseball:** The rule was updated to reflect the changes that were anticipated and published two years ago regarding bats with 2 5/8 inch barrels. As a result, composite-barreled baseball bats in this division, regardless of barrel size, must meet BBCOR (Batted Ball Co-Efficient of Restitution) standards, and must be so labeled. Note that all composite-barreled baseball bats that meet the BBCOR standard have a "drop" of no more than "minus-3." However, in the Junior League Baseball division, bats that **do not have composite materials in the barrel (i.e., all metal, all alloy, all wood)**, and meet all other applicable standards, can have ANY drop weight. Bats with a barrel of less than 2 5/8 inches also can be used in the Junior League Baseball Division, but must still comply with all other specifications noted.

- **For Senior League Baseball and Big League Baseball:** The rule was updated to reflect the changes that were anticipated and published two years ago regarding bats with 2 5/8 inch barrels.

As a result, all bats with non-wood barrels must meet BBCOR (Batted Ball Co-Efficient of Restitution) standards, and must be so labeled. Because all BBCOR bats have a "drop" of no more than "minus-3," this means all non-wood bats in these divisions must have a drop of no more than minus-3.

- **Tamper-Evident Bats:** Because the technology to create bats that show evidence of tampering is not yet available, this aspect of the rules that was anticipated and published two years ago, and again last year, will not apply in 2012.

- **Penalty for Use of an Illegal Bat:** Previously, the penalty for the use of an illegal bat was simply to remove the bat from the game. In 2012, the penalty has been increased as noted in the rules below.

- **Definition of an Illegal Bat:** To narrow the definition of an illegal bat, a new entry was added to Rule 2.00, specifically describing an illegal bat for the purposes of imposing the penalty. As a result, the definition includes altered bats, but excludes a bat that: is no longer smooth because of normal use; is cracked or dented because of normal use; has a handle that has a smaller diameter than the measurement noted in the specifications; or, has material on the grip (or no material) that does not meet the specifications.

- **Softball:** All rules regarding bats in all softball divisions remain the same as in 2011. The moratorium on composite-barreled bats does not apply to softball.

Licensed Bats: As it has for decades, Little League is publishing a list of licensed bats, all of which have a barrel diameter of 2 1/4 inches. This is not a list of all bats that can be used. As long as the bat meets all the specifications and standards for the specific division of play in question, it need not carry the Little League trademark. (Note that Little League does not license any bats with a diameter of 2 5/8 inches.) The list of licensed 2 1/4 bats can be downloaded as a PDF here: [All Licensed 2 1/4 Bats](#).

1 The rules regarding baseball bats for 2012 are:

2 **Rule 1.10 - Baseball** - The bat must be a baseball bat which meets Little League specifications and standards as noted in this rule. It shall be a smooth, rounded stick and made of wood or of material and color tested and proved acceptable to Little League standards.

3 **Little League (Majors) and below:** it shall not be more than thirty-three (33) inches in length nor more than two and one-quarter (2 1/4) inches in diameter. Non-wood bats shall be labeled with a BPF (bat performance factor) of 1.15 or less; **EXCEPTION: For the 2011-2012 Little League (Majors) and below, for regular season play and Tournament, composite bats are prohibited unless approved by Little League International.**

4 **A list of approved and licensed composite bats can be found on the Little League website at www.littleleague.org.**

5 **Junior League:** it shall not be more than 34 inches in length; nor more than 2 5/8 inches in diameter, and if wood, not less than fifteen-sixteenths (15/16) inches in diameter (7/8 inch for bats less than 30") at its smallest part. All composite bats shall meet the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) performance standard, and such bats shall be so labeled with a silkscreen or other permanent certification mark. The certification mark shall be rectangular, a minimum of a half-inch on each side and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting color.

6 **Senior/Big League:** it shall not be more than 36 inches in length, nor more than 2 5/8 inches in diameter, and if wood, not less than fifteen-sixteenths (15/16) inches in diameter (7/8 inch for bats less than 30") at its smallest part. The bat shall not weigh, numerically, more than three ounces less than the length of the bat (e.g., a 33-inch-long bat cannot weigh less than 30 ounces). All bats not made of a single piece of wood shall meet the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) performance standard, and such bats shall be so labeled with a silkscreen or other permanent certification mark. The certification mark shall be rectangular,

a minimum of a half-inch on each side and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting color. Aluminum and composite bats shall be marked as to their material makeup being aluminum or composite. This marking shall be silkscreen or other permanent certification mark, a minimum of one-half-inch on each side and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting color.

7 In all divisions, wood bats may be taped or fitted with a sleeve for a distance not exceeding sixteen (16) inches (18 inches for Junior/Senior/Big League baseball) from the small end. A non-wood bat must have a grip of cork, tape or composition material, and must extend a minimum of 10 inches from the small end. Slippery tape or similar material is prohibited.

8 **NOTE 1:** Junior/Senior/Big League: The 2 3/4 inch in diameter bat is not allowed in any division.

9 **NOTE 2:** The traditional batting donut is not permissible

10 **NOTE 3:** The bat may carry the mark "Little League Tee Ball."

11 **NOTE 4:** Non-wood bats may develop dents from time to time. Bats that cannot pass through the approved Little League bat ring for the appropriate division must be removed from play. The 2¼ inch bat ring must be used for bats in the Tee Ball, Minor League and Little League Baseball divisions. The 2 5/8 inch bat ring must be used for bats in the Junior, Senior and Big League divisions of baseball.

12 **NOTE 5:** An illegal bat must be removed. Any bat that has been altered shall be removed from play. Penalty – See Rule – 6.06 (d).

13 **Rule 2.00 Definition of Illegal Bat**
 Illegal Bat – An Illegal bat is a bat that has been altered or a bat that is not approved for play because it does not meet specifications with regard to length, weight, barrel diameter, labeling or performance standard for the division in which it is used.

14 **Rule 6.06 – Baseball** - The batter is out for illegal action when –
 (d) The batter enters the batter’s box with an illegal bat (see bat specifications Rule 1.10) or is discovered having used an illegal bat.

Note: If the infraction is discovered before the next pitch following the turn at bat of the player who used an illegal bat -

1. The manager of the defense may advise the plate umpire of a decision to decline the penalty and accept the play. Such election shall be made immediately at the end of the play.
2. For the first violation, the offensive team will lose one eligible adult base coach for the duration of the game.
3. For the second violation, the manager of the team will be ejected from the game. Any subsequent violation will result in the newly designated manager being ejected.

MORE OPTIONS NOW AVAILABLE IN TEEN DIVISIONS OF LITTLE LEAGUE

*By Communications Division
 SOUTH WILLIAMSPORT, Pa.
 November 16, 2011*

Little League International today announced a change to the regulations for 2012 that will allow more options in the teenage divisions of baseball.

Effective Jan. 1, 2012:

- The Senior League Baseball Division (previously limited to players league age 14-16) may now include players league age 13-16.

- The Big League Baseball Division

(previously limited to players league age 16-18) may now include players league age 15-18.

- For Tournament Play, the age divisions will be: Junior League 13-14; Senior League 13-16; and Big League 15-18.

The Junior League Baseball Division remains for players league age 13-14 during the regular season. (Note: As before, 12-year-olds also are eligible for Junior League Baseball regular season play, under certain criteria.)

This gives local leagues wide latitude in tailoring their regular season teenage baseball divisions based on the avail-

able talent pool and age breakdown.

“All of the changes in the rules and regulations for 2012 will be announced in the next few days,” Patrick W. Wilson, Senior Vice President of Operations and Program Development, said. “We wanted to get this change out to our leagues and districts sooner, however, for planning purposes.”

The change also will affect pitch-count limits in Tournament Play, so the days of rest guide will apply to 13-18 year olds participating in the Senior and Big League divisions. Pitch count limits for the regular season remain the same as in 2011, based on the age of the pitcher.

Baseball Superstition...

*Do not talk about a no hitter or perfect game while
 it is in progress...*

WHAT CAN I EXPECT IF I ATTEND UMPIRE SCHOOL?

Taken from the Little League International Publication "Fairball"

Article written by Mike Messick, Little League 2010 Volunteer Of The Year

As Lead Instructor at the Little League Umpire School conducted at Little League International in South Williamsport, I am often forwarded e-mails or asked: What Can I expect at Umpire School; and the follow-up: "Is it worth my time, effort and money to attend?"

My first response is: Anytime you can attend a training session, it can only benefit you in your umpiring career and will be well worth the time and cost. It has been said and is very true that you can always learn something whether it be a new mechanic or interpretation; pick new ideas or tips; or to just update and refresh your previous umpire training. You will also meet some new umpires from all over the country and walks of life that can become lifelong friends, while having a great time.

Since I teach at the Headquarters School, and have not personally attended all the Umpire Schools held at the various Regional Centers, I will only talk about and reference our program at Little League International. But no matter whether the Umpire School is held at the Regional Centers or in Williamsport, our overall program is staffed and run by experienced and dedicated instructors. We are all using the same syllabus/curriculum so that no matter which School you attend, you will receive the same training and interpretations.

For a nominal fee, you will receive lodging (in our case it is the same dorms the players stay in during the World Series); five days of training; all the training materials/manuals/handouts and meals. On our evaluations, the food has been complimented as being worth the fee alone.

In April, we hold a week-long (Sunday through Friday) School. Most umpires are already well into their regular seasons, so typically, the biggest question is: "Why can't you hold it earlier in the year?"

We know and understand this, but due to weather considerations (we have a lot of outdoor activities), we cannot hold the School any earlier than April. As for your league needing you, we under-

stand and respect that, but if you can arrange it, your league, the children and you personally will benefit greatly by attending.

When you return home, you will be more confident and a better umpire. These changes will be noticed and appreciated by everyone, especially the children who we are doing this for.

I try to relate to everyone, that if you would have an illness or emergency and could not umpire for a while, could and would your league be able to get by until you return? So this is a similar situation, that if they can spare you for a few days, it will be well worth it to everyone because of the improvement in your umpiring which can only help your league.

Our training program and the mechanics have been developed; over the past 20-plus years. All our field mechanics have been developed and field tested so that with the least amount of movement, the umpire can be in the best angle, distance and position to make the best call possible.

So whether you are an umpire just starting out; an umpire who has a few years experience and wanting to try and advance to higher levels; or a seasoned umpire, who is experienced and wants to make sure he/she is up to date, our program is designed so that there is something in it for everyone.

In our Little League International program, we limit class size to a maximum of 45. There are six instructors (who have been through our program and had at least one World Series assignment) and myself. We stay on site so that we are accessible if there are any questions or someone needs further information/training after hours.

So what really happens when you arrive at the School?

The following is a brief overview of the program. Our program runs from Sunday afternoon through Friday at lunch. Everyone arrives on Sunday afternoon and we start with a Staff meeting at 2 p.m.; a welcome and orientation for everyone at 3 p.m. followed by dinner at 4 p.m. After dinner we go down to the fields and go through the Basic Six Drill, which is proper way for an umpire to make his/her signals during a game. After the Basic Six Drill, we return to the classroom for a rules session and retire

for the evening at 7:30 p.m.

Our daily schedule, Monday-Thursday, starts at 7:30 a.m. with breakfast and from 8-to-10 a.m. we have rule sessions. The class is divided into three equal groups and we head down to the fields for the mechanics' drills on either the 60-foot, 90-foot diamond or the batting cages for plate mechanics.

After lunch, at 12:15 PM, we return to the fields for another Basic Six Drill and split into the three groups for two more field mechanics sessions. Dinner is served at 5 p.m. and then we have another rules session in the classroom until 7:30 p.m. After we have finished the formal sessions for the day, the instructors stay around to be available for any question/answer sessions or to help the students with any rules or mechanics problems that they may have.

On Friday after breakfast, we meet in the classroom and the students take a rules test. This test is not just a pass/fail situation but it gives the students and the instructors an idea on what they need to improve/work on to better themselves and our program. After the tests have been corrected and returned, there is a brief ceremony to present the certificates, qualification cards and umpire patches. We say our "thank yous," collect the evaluation forms, serve lunch and say our "good-byes."

So you can see it is full, exciting and rewarding week and by the time the week is over, you will have dissected the entire Rule Book; had at least six (6) hours of practical experience of field mechanics on the 60-foot, 90-foot diamond and plate mechanics.

Every day there is something new to learn and we build on what was presented the day before. During the course of the weeks' training, we cover all aspects of baseball and softball. You will have had an opportunity to have any and all your questions asked and answered, because we always say that if you come here with a question or problem and we did not fully answer or take care of that, then we did not do our job. I will guarantee you that you will have a fun filled, educational and enlightening week and will return to your League and umpiring career as a better, more confident, better informed umpire to better help your League and the children of your community.

WHY DO SOME LITTLE LEAGUE GAMES RUN SO SLOWLY?

Article submitted by Alan Sopczak, Little League and up Umpire, Calgary, Alberta, with kind assistance from Dennis Scheuneman

There are many reasons for a baseball game to move slowly. The pace of the game is influenced by many factors. I'm not going to get into all the reasons in this article but instead concentrate on one specific rule in the rulebook.

Rule 6.02

6.02-

(a) The batter shall take his/her position in the batter's box promptly when it is said batter's time at bat.

(b) The batter shall not leave that position in the batter's box after the pitcher comes to Set Position, or starts a windup.

Lets take a look at section (a) and the batter's time at bat. This is the time where the batter attempts to get on base. The "time at bat" starts when the actions and plays of the previous batter or other runners on the field have ended. At this point the next batter is expected to be in the batter's box unless **allowed** to leave by the umpire.

It is very common for today's players, after each pitch, to step out of the batter's box, get his/her signs, take a few practice swings then finally get back in the box. If you notice under section (a) of rule 6.02 it states the batter has to take his or her position in the batters box promptly when it is said batter's time at bat. There is nothing in the rulebook that allows the batter to step out of the box after each pitch to take signs – this has become an accepted practice but the rules do not directly address it.

If you take a look at Section 2, **Batter's Box** it states:

*The **BATTER'S BOX** is the area within which the batter **must stand** during a time at bat.*

It uses the strong wording, **MUST STAND**. Since the time at bat is the entire time the batter is attempting to get on base it is very clear the intent. (Other rules do allow the batter to move out of the way to prevent interfering with another play or attempted play.)

After each pitch the batter may wish to get a signal from his or her coach, but to do this the batter does not need to step fully out of the box. They can pivot sideways, remove 1 foot from the box, get their signs and then pivot back and get ready to receive the next pitch. If the batter is looking at the 3rd base coach for signs, and is a right handed batter a quick pivot on the back foot works. For a left handed batter there is no reason to leave the box. (The umpire will see this and not allow a pitch to be delivered while signs are being taken.)

Let take a very quick look at how MLB has addressed this issue.

Here is what is stated in the MLB rules regarding this: 6.02 (d)

- (d) The following rule shall be in effect for all National Association Leagues:*
- (1) The batter shall keep at least one foot in the batter's box throughout the batter's time at bat, unless one of the following exceptions applies, in which case the batter may leave the batter's box but not the dirt area surrounding home plate:*
- (i) The batter swings at a pitch;*
 - (ii) The batter is forced out of the batter's box by a pitch;*
 - (iii) A member of either team requests and is granted "Time";*
 - (iv) A defensive player attempts a play on a runner at any base;*
 - (v) The batter feints a bunt;*
 - (vi) A wild pitch or passed ball occurs;*
 - (vii) The pitcher leaves the dirt area of the pitching mound after receiving the ball; or*
 - (viii) The catcher leaves the catcher's box to give defensive signals.*

If the batter intentionally leaves the batter's box and delays play, and none of the exceptions listed in Rule 6.02(d) (1)(i) through (viii) applies, the umpire shall award a strike without the pitcher having to deliver the pitch. The ball is dead, and no runners may advance. The umpire shall award additional strikes, without the pitcher having to deliver the pitch, if the batter remains outside the batter's box and further delays play.

And the North American League has also fully adopted 6.02 (d) to speed games up.

I can think of no valid reason for the batter to step out of the box after each pitch to take a few practice swings. This

could be viewed as a delay of game and the umpire could rule accordingly – see 4.15 (6). By the time the batter reaches the box, at the start of their time at bat, they should have had a number of practice swings and be ready to go.

Unless there is a valid reason the umpire should not allow this stepping out, to take a few practice swing, to happen. While it may only take a few seconds, these few seconds do add up.

Let's look at, for example, the batter stepping out to take a few practice swings. This may only take 5 seconds, add another 3 seconds for the batter to get back into the box and get set and we are up to 8 seconds. Then, the pitcher has to then get ready (he waits until the batter is in the box), maybe get his signs (again) from the catcher, check the runners on the bases if there are runners and then finally pitch. We could be now up to 30 seconds or more between pitches.

If the pitcher sees that the batter is ready to go this will also encourage the pitcher to get ready sooner. Let's say we can, just as an example, shave 15 seconds from each pitch. The batter stayed in the box, the pitcher got ready and pitched. If we use an arbitrary number of 10 batters per full inning, a 6 inning game and we could realistically see a time-saving of around 15 min. per game.

The other area to consider is the granting of time to step out. A lot of batters raise their hands, step out and assume time has been given. Time is not granted until the umpire grants it and only then. A umpire does not have to grant time to a batter just because the batter wants it without a valid reason to ask for it. (In most cases it will be obvious to the umpire why time is needed or not needed.)

I have started, at Little League games I umpire, reminding coaches (quickly), at the plate meeting about rule 6.02 and to tell their players to stay in the box. It is amazing how fast the game goes and how well it runs. (I do not explain 6.02 – I am not there to teach the rules at a plate meeting.)

This then makes the game more enjoyable for parents to watch, players to play and overall gives a much more pleasurable experience.

**LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL CANADA 2012
BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT
SCHEDULE (S U B J E C T T O C H A N G E)**

Baseball**Major (Little League):**

World Series: Williamsport, Pennsylvania, Aug 16-26

Canadian Championship: Edmonton, AB, Aug 4-11

Divisionals:

Atlantic: St.John, NB Date TBD

Quebec: Val D'Or, QC, Date TBD

Ontario: Ottawa, ON, D2, Date TBD

Prairies: Lethbridge, AB, Date TBD

British Columbia: Trail, BC, Date TBD

Junior:

World Series: Taylor, Michigan, Aug. 12-18

Canadian Championship: Lethbridge, AB, Aug. 1-9

Divisionals:

Atlantic: Cape Breton, NS, Date TBD

Quebec: Valleyfield, QC, Date TBD

Ontario: Cornwall, ON, Date TBD

Prairies: District 8, Date TBD

British Columbia: D5 or D3, Date TBD

Senior:

World Series: Bangor, Maine, Aug. 12-18

Canadian Championship: Regina, SK, Aug. 2-8

Divisionals:

Atlantic: Cape Breton, NS, Date TBD

Quebec: Valleyfield, QC, Date TBD

Ontario: Thunder Bay, ON, Date TBD

Prairies: Date and location TBD

British Columbia: D3 or D5, Date TBD

Big League:

World Series: Easley, South Carolina, July 25- Aug. 1

Canadian Championship: Rouyn-Noranda, QC, July 17-22

Divisionals:

Atlantic: New Brunswick, Date TBD

Quebec: Brossard, QC, Date TBD

Ontario: Oakville, ON, Date TBD

Prairies: Edmonton, AB, Date TBD

British Columbia: D3 or D5, Date TBD

Softball**Major (Little League):**

World Series: Portland, Oregon, Aug. 9-15

Canadian Championship: Date and location TBD

Divisionals:

Ontario: TBD

Prairies: TBD

British Columbia: TBD

Junior:

World Series: Kirkland, Washington, Aug. 12-18

Canadian Championship: Date and location TBD

Divisionals:

Ontario: TBD

Prairies: TBD

Senior:

World Series: Lower Sussex, Delaware, Aug. 5-11

Canadian Championship: Windsor, ON, Date TBD

Divisionals: TBD

Big League:

World Series: Kalamazoo, Michigan, Aug. 2-8

Canadian Championship: Windsor, ON, Date TBD

Divisionals: TBD

**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 out-
come of the game**

If anyone has information that can help to fill in the blanks...dates, District or League hosts, for any of the above, please email me with the details so I can update this page...thestretch@littleleague.ca

Little League Baseball Canada is now on Facebook! Click on the logo in this and any future issue to take you to our page.





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Become an Alumni Member and support Little League in your community and across the Country.

The Little League Baseball Canada Foundation's goal is "to ensure that all children in Canada have the chance to participate in Little League regardless of their abilities, either physical or financial". For an annual membership of \$10.00 or three year membership of \$25.00, as an Alumni member you will have the opportunity to have input into the growth and direction of Little League and its programs.

For a membership application form, please contact Little League Baseball Canada at Canada@littleleague.org.

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