



NOVATO SOUTH LITTLE LEAGUE



PARENT HANDBOOK

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I. ABOUT NOVATO SOUTH

Mailing Address

Novato South Little League
448 Ignacio Blvd. #348
Novato, CA 94949

Our mailbox is located in the UPS store in Pacheco Plaza in Ignacio. Feel free to drop off your paperwork directly to the UPS staff for our mailbox.

Web Address

All the information in this document plus scores, schedules, forms and announcements can be found on our league website.

<http://www.novatosouthlittleleague.com>

League E-Mail Address

If you have any questions or wish to send comments to our Board of Directors simply send an email to: info.novatosouth@gmail.com.

League Facebook Page

Keep up on all the action including photos and videos of our players, rain out alerts in your newsfeed and much more by liking our Facebook page. Note you don't need a Facebook account to view the content on our page.

<https://www.facebook.com/novatosouth>

LEAGUE BOUNDARIES

Novato South Little League (NSLL) serves children who reside OR attend school (including private school) within its boundary. NSLL's boundary is comprised of the area within the following Novato Unified School District (NUSD) elementary school boundaries: Hamilton, Loma Verde, Lu Sutton, Lynwood, and Olive. Other schools within the above NUSD boundaries (and thus within NSLL's boundary) include San Jose Middle School, Good Shepherd, Our Lady of Loretto, and Novato Charter School.

For information on NUSD school boundaries, visit the NUSD website and click on the "Registration" tab.

<http://www.nusd.org/>

Novato South is incorporated in Little League District 3 which covers all of San Francisco and Marin County.

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The focus of Novato South Little League needs to be on the Players. Decisions by the Board of Directors, Officers, Managers, Coaches, and other adult volunteers should always be made with the best interest of all the players in mind. Not just a few! In particular, this rule should be used when choosing Managers and Coaches, as well as when deciding whether to make changes in those positions during the season.

The heart of Little League is what happens between the Manager and the Player. It is the Manager more than any other individual who makes our program a success or failure, and that determination has to be made separately for every individual player in our league. The job of manager is made especially difficult by three factors: 1) we lose many of our experienced managers every year after they have gained the necessary knowledge and skills, 2) Many of our managers are untrained in youth leadership, and 3) many of our managers and coaches have their own children on their own teams. Because of these inherent difficulties, Novato South Little League needs to be especially cognizant of and sensitive to situations that can have a lasting impact on the children of our league. Further, the league has a responsibility to provide meaningful training to managers and coaches who will have control over the experience that children have in Little League.

In varying degrees and in different ways, children in Little League are at ages that make them want to emancipate themselves from their parents and look for other persons to typify the ideals and virtues that once were represented by their parents. This is an age of hero worship. Therefore, not only managers but everyone involved in Novato South Little League should strive to represent the highest ideals of behavior and be the type of role model that is most healthy for children to emulate.

These ideals of behavior include but are not limited to the following:

1. Every child should be treated fairly and given the training necessary to advance his/her individual skills.
2. Every representative of NSLL should demonstrate sensitivity to ethnic, racial and gender differences among players, parents and others. Comments or actions that demonstrate lack of such sensitivity will not be tolerated.
3. No representative of NSLL will use tobacco, alcohol or other inappropriate substances at League sponsored events in front of children.
4. Every representative of NSLL shall respect the individual rights of children
5. No representative of NSLL will resort to name-calling, violence or other forms of immature behavior that can negatively influence children. i.e. (arguing with umpires and fellow coaches)
6. Representatives of NSLL will not try to better things for their own benefit but only for the benefits of the entire league.

LITTLE LEAGUE PHILOSOPHY

“Little League is a program of service to youth, it is geared to provide an outlet of healthful activities and a training under good leadership in the atmosphere of wholesome community participation. The movement is dedicated to helping children become good and decent citizens. It strives to inspire them with a goal and to enrich their lives towards the day when they must take their places in the world. It establishes the values of teamwork, sportsmanship and fair play.”

Little League Official Regulations and Playing Rules

NSLL MISSION

“To provide an opportunity for our community’s children to learn the game of baseball in a safe and friendly environment.”

Novato South Little League is a non-profit organization run by volunteers that aspires to be an outstanding educational-athletic organization that provides a high-quality experience, in which every athlete:

- Is coached using the principles of the Little League Double-Goal Coach
- Has fun playing the game
- Feels like an important part of the team regardless of performance
- Learns “life lessons” that have value beyond the playing field
- Learns the skills, tactics and strategies of the game and improves as a player.

We recognize coaches most directly make this possible, so we provide our coaches with the tools to succeed. We are committed to creating a culture in which coaches, parents, fans, umpires and athletes work together to achieve our mission. Little League Double-Goal® Coaches have two goals: 1) winning, and more importantly, 2) teaching life lessons through baseball.

OBJECTIVES

The objective of NSLL shall be to implant firmly in the children of the community the ideals of good sportsmanship, honesty, loyalty, courage, and respect for authority. We strive to instill the fundamentals of baseball to increase the enjoyment of the game. The goals of our objective are that the children grow to be good, decent, healthy and trustworthy citizens.

Kids from every demographic, of varying abilities, and from all over the Novato South area play in our League. Our main objectives are to have balanced teams with kids of varying abilities on each team, develop their baseball skills through proper coaching in a positive fashion, have the kids make new friends and, most importantly, to make sure the kids have fun all along the way.

OPPORTUNITIES

We offer playing opportunities for kids from age 4 through age 12. To add to the overall experience, there is an Opening Day ceremony, Little League Day at AT&T Park, post-season tournaments, league champion tournaments, and All-Star tournaments. NSLL games are played on a variety of fields throughout Novato. All of this is at an affordable price makes what we believe is an unbeatable value in youth sports in Novato. We also offer scholarships to those who can't afford our fees because we believe in Little League International's motto that "every child can play regardless of what they can pay."

FOR OUR NEW FAMILIES STARTING OUT IN T-BALL KIDS, T-BALL, MINOR A

Welcome to Novato South Little League baseball. We're very excited to have all of you in our baseball family! We encourage you to read through each section in this handbook to get familiar with our league. Some quick information:

T-Ball and Minor A teams are usually formed between the middle and end of February. You should hear from your team manager at the end of February or start of March. Practices generally start the week of March 1st. Games will begin on or just after Opening Day in the middle of March.

For equipment, the league will provide a jersey, cap, batting helmets, and some bats. We recommend trying out some of the league bats first before going out and buying one. You will need to provide cleats, and a mitt and baseball pants and socks. Your team Manager will let you know what color (depends on your team colors). Catchers gear is also provided for Minor A levels and up. Read through our Equipping Your Player section to assist with sizing, type and other details.

II. EQUIPPING YOUR PLAYER

UNIFORMS

Little League uniforms consist of a jersey, cap, belt, baseball pants, baseball socks and cleats.

The League Provides:

- Cap
- Jersey
- Batting Helmets
- Pitching Helmets (Minor AA and up)

You Will Need To Provide:

- Belt
- Baseball Pants
- Baseball Socks
- Cleats

Optional

- Cup (mandatory for catchers)
- Undershirt
- Batting Gloves

Your team manager will let you know what color belt, pants, and socks to have for the season. Cleats should be turf cleats (non-metal). Metal spikes are not allowed in Little League.

BATS

The biggest deal to kids at all levels is the bat! Unfortunately bats are also the most hyped by the manufacturers and getting straight information is not very easy in many cases. First let's look at the options.

New USA Bat Standard: Beginning Jan. 1, 2018 all bats used in Little League play must have the USA label on them to show the bat conforms to the new USA bat standard.

Material

Bats are generally built with one of 4 types of materials.

Aluminum (Alloy)

- Aluminum is lighter in weight which increases control and bat speed. Balls travel farther with aluminum over other metals.
- Despite generally higher costs than other materials, aluminum is durable and not prone to crack or break
- Aluminum bats come in a variety of alloys each with a different weight
- Generally, lighter aluminum alloys are thinner and more durable. The one thing these have in common is that they are all different combinations of Zinc, Copper, Magnesium and Aluminum. The following is a list of the different alloys and their benefits.

- 7046: This is the standard aluminum alloy used in most bats
- CU31/7050: More durable than 7046, due to increased levels of zirconium, magnesium, and copper
- C405/7055: Increased Zirconium content than 7050, giving higher strength
- C555: 7% stronger than C405, has traces of scandium, which increases strength
- Lighter weight bats also increase the "sweet spot," the hitting zone on the bat's barrel that gives the maximum place to put metal to ball
- Aluminum bats, and those enhanced with other alloys, also come in single-layer or double-layer construction
- Double-layer bats offer more durability and power, since the ball rebounds off the bat with more authority
- Cryogenically treated aluminum--Alloy is frozen and reheated to provide greater durability, less vibration and 2-4% greater distance
- Relatively inexpensive compared to composite and hybrids

Composite

- Technology has enabled bat makers to use lighter, stronger materials such as graphite and titanium.
- Both are usually added to thinner-wall aluminum bats, enabling bats to be lighter and increasing a player's swing speed
- These materials also allow a bigger sweet spot
- Graphite and titanium also help reduce vibration and the sting of ball shock, the tingling feeling sent to the hands usually when you miss hitting the ball in the bat's sweet spot (also known as bees)
- Higher performance. Ball travels faster and farther than other materials
- Requires a break in period for maximum performance
- Not as durable as Aluminum can be damaged easily
- Really expensive!!!

Hybrid

- Hybrids are bats made of both composite and aluminum.
- Barrel of the bat is aluminum
- Handle is composite that helps reduce vibration and the sting of ball shock, the tingling feeling sent to the hands usually when you miss hitting the ball in the bat's sweet spot (also known as bees)
- More durable than pure composite
- Still expensive but not as much as pure composite

Wood (not recommended)

- Very heavy with far less performance
- Subject to cracking

How to Choose

For T-Ball through Minor AA there really is no reason to choose a composite or hybrid bat. Swing speeds at these levels are not high enough to reap the rewards of the higher performance and at younger ages, kids are more prone to losing or damaging them.

For Minor AAA and Majors composite bats make more sense. If your player is highly skilled and dedicated to baseball these bats can offer an edge. Otherwise there is nothing wrong with aluminum bats. They offer good performance and durability for quite a bit less.

Sizing

Most major sports retail websites have sizing charts that can assist you in picking the right length and weight. The basic rule is that the bat when placed on the floor barrel side down, the handle should come up to about bottom part of the hip. For weight, the player should be able to grab the handle with one hand and point the bat straight ahead for 20 seconds or so comfortably.

We generally recommend getting the lightest bat at the proper length as possible. Having a bat that is too heavy can cause bad swing mechanics and in some cases injury.

Shopping Tip

Bat manufacturers release new models every year. Most of the time, the composition of the bat is the exact same as last year's model with the only change being the paint job on the outside. If you find a bat you like, look to see if last year's model is still available and compare the bats. You can save over \$120 on composite bats and \$50 to \$70 on aluminum bats by getting a year old model that is exactly the same!

GLOVES

With so many different types of glove available, finding the right one can be confusing even for parents with kids in league for several years. We'll try to take some of the mystery out this below:



Figure 1 - How to measure for sizing

The most important factor in choosing a glove is to choose the proper size. The glove size is determined by two factors, age and position. For the youngest players, position may not matter as much, but the more specialized a player becomes on the field, the more they will require the glove that matches.

AGE	CATCHER	1 ST BASE	2B/SS	3 RD BASE	PITCHER	OUTFIELD
4-7	29.5-30"	11.5"	8-10.5"	8-10.5"	8-10.5"	9-10.5"
8 – 10	30-31"	11.5-12"	10.5-11.25"	10.5-11.5"	10.5-11.5"	10-12"
11-13	30-32.5"	11.5-12"	11-11.5"	11-11.75"	11.5-12"	11.75-12.75"

How to measure hand

Have the player hold out their catching hand, palm flat, in the “stop” position, fingers vertical, wrist facing down.

If a player is right-handed, they will use their left hand to catch.

If a player is left-handed, they will use their right hand to catch

Write down the measurement using the illustration above and find the glove closest to the measurement.

Sizing T-Ball through Minor AA

For the younger players 9 and under, position is not an issue as they will be playing multiple positions. Choose a middle position size such as for 3rd Base in the chart above.

Sizing AAA and Majors

By AAA, players will become more specialized. Use the chart above to find the size of the position they play most often.

Glove Material

Baseball gloves typically come in 3 different material types.

Leather

- The majority of gloves are made from this material.
- Leather offers the best comfort, control, and feel.
- Sturdy leather means stiffer gloves, but after they are broken in, this sturdiness becomes durability.
- These gloves will be stamped with a label saying “Genuine Leather”

Treated leather

- Leather is treated and softened with chemicals for faster break-in.
- Treated leather also reduces the care needed for the glove and helps the glove keep its shape.
- Treated leather should not be regarded as the same as a part fabric, part leather glove. These gloves are often very flimsy and can't be repaired.
- Treated leather gloves typically do not last as long as untreated leather.

Synthetic materials

- A lighter, less-durable material that doesn't hold up to the rigors of the game as well.
- Less expensive, and good for youngsters to learn with.
- Unlike leather gloves, when a synthetic or plastic glove wears out, it can't be repaired by a professional leather worker, and should be replaced.

Pocket and Webbing Types

Pocket

- The size of the pocket depends on your position
- Shallow pockets really help middle infielders quickly grab the ball and throw
- Deeper pockets help outfielders shag down fly balls

Webbing

Different styles of webbing are available to either help you better field your position or to fit your preference

- A closed web is preferred for pitchers who want to hide the ball from the batter
- Outfielders and third basemen like the extra support from a closed web
- An open web helps middle infielders get the ball out of their gloves quicker to make throws

Backs

- There are two choices of backs, open or closed
- The type of back is matter of personal preference, but some styles fit some positions better
- The open back leaves a space open across the glove's back
- Middle infielders prefer this for the flexibility
- Outfielders prefer a closed back with a "finger hole" for extra support



Figure 2- Pocket and Webbing Types

SPECIALTY GEAR

Things like catchers gear, first basemen's gloves, wrist protectors, baseball sunglasses, batting and pitching helmets, etc. are out there for you to purchase.

The League Provides:

- Batting Helmets
- Pitching Helmets
- Catchers Gear

The rest are up to you if you wish. Some kids who are dedicated to catching may want their own gear. Most players want their own batting helmets by the time they get to Minor AA or AAA as well. Our recommendation is to take advantage of the league supplied gear at the lower levels and go from there. Be sure your player is truly dedicated to playing baseball before stocking up on all the stuff that's out there to purchase.

III. SEASONS, AGE DIVISIONS

Novato South Little League offers 3 distinct seasons each year.

Spring Season

T-Ball Kids

Runs from the middle of March for 8 weeks.

T-Ball / Minor A

Runs from March until the middle of May. Minor A has evaluations in late January and practices usually start at the beginning of March.

Minor AA/AAA and Majors

Runs from the middle of January for tryouts to around the first week of June with games starting the second week of March. Regular season games run from March to the end of May with the playoffs, Tournament of Champions, and City Championships running through the middle of June. The latter are only for the teams that win the playoffs and / or regular season. Note that there are no City Championships or T.O.C. for Minor AA.

Signups begin on November 1st and run through the first week of January.

All-Stars

All-Stars runs from the middle of June until the middle of July. Teams are assembled by the vote of the managers of the regular spring season. See the section on All-Stars for details.

Fall Ball

Fall ball is for Minor and Major players and runs from around the first or second week of September through October. This is an instructional league. Scores are not kept. Focus is on improving and learning new skills and positions.

Signups begin in the middle of June

AGE DIVISIONS

T-Ball Kids

The T-Ball Kids division is for kids age 4. This is an 8-week instructional program that will meet one day a week, for about an hour. Experienced coaches will work with the players on all aspects of the game, from proper throwing mechanics and good glove work, to proper base running and how to be a good teammate. Essentially our goal is to build a proper baseball foundation, so that our younger players grow through the league they will be prepared for each step along the way.

T-Ball

The Tee Ball division is for kids ages 5 through 6. It is an introduction to baseball, played on a small diamond. A tee is used for the first 2 games of the season then coaches pitch. Safety balls are used during the entire year.

Minor A

The Minor “A” Division is for kids age 6 to 9. 6 year olds must try out. 9 years olds must waive down to play at this level. Coaches pitch all year. Games are an extension of practice - low key and non-competitive. Focus is on fundamental skills and sportsmanship. Accordingly, game scores and league standings are not maintained. Players and parents should expect 2 games and/or practices a week. This level is similar to the Rookie level in past seasons and is played with a safety ball for the entire season.

Minor AA

The Minor “AA” division is for players age 7 to 11 years of age that are drafted following try outs. 11 year olds must waive down to play at this level. This division is intended to be an introductory competitive division. Managers and Coaches should keep this in mind as they develop the skills of all players on their team. This is a kid pitch division using a hard ball and umpires will call balls and strikes. Games are 6 innings. Batting orders will be continuous. Players and parents should expect 3 games and/or practices a week.

Minor AAA

The Minor “AAA” division is for players age 8 to 12 years of age that are drafted following tryouts. 12 year olds must waive down to play at this level. Games are 6 innings. Batting orders will be continuous and players will play a minimum of 3 innings in the field. Players and parents should expect 4 games and/or practices a week.

Majors

The Major Division is for players age 10 to 12 that are drafted following tryouts. It is a highly competitive level of play. There is no continuous batting order and each player will play a minimum of 2 innings in the field and bat at least once. Players and parents should expect 5 games and/or practices a week.

Challenger

Little League International's Challenger Division was established in 1989 as a separate division of Little League to enable boys and girls with physical and mental challenges to enjoy the game of baseball along with the millions of other children who participate in this sport worldwide. Today, more than 30,000 children participate in more than 900 Challenger Divisions worldwide, including our local District 3 counterparts in Mill Valley, Dixie Terra Linda, and now our very own league in Novato!

- Open to all children (regardless of home address) ages 5-12 with a physical or mental disability
- Registration is free!
- 5-week season from April until May
- Games are held on Sundays
- Majors and Minors managers volunteer their time to help with the games
- Players receive a league jersey and hat
- Slots limited to the first 18 players to register

IV. TRYOUTS, PLAYER EVALUATIONS

Tryouts and player evaluations generally occur the last weekend of January. Players with last names A-K go on Saturday and players with last names L-Z go on Sunday.

Players are put through a series of stations that have them demonstrate their ability to hit, catch, throw, and run. Team managers and league officials observe and score each player based upon their assessment of the player's skills and abilities.

What is the difference between tryouts and evaluations?

Tryouts: For our Majors, Minor AAA, and Minor AA divisions, only players that demonstrate the ability to play at each respective level are chosen. Major managers choose first then AAA then AA.

Evaluations: For our Minor A division, players are evaluated to ensure the teams are fairly distributed with higher and lesser skilled/experienced players.

Who should attend?

All players age 6 or older are encouraged to attend. If a player does not tryout, they will be placed in the lowest division for their age but no lower than the division they played in last year and be chosen anonymously via a "hat pick" (name picked out of a hat) toward the end of the draft (Majors, Minor AAA, Minor AA only). Players planning on playing in T-Ball or who have waived down to T-Ball do not need to attend.

Wear baseball attire (baseball pants, cap) and bring your glove, bat, and a cup if you wish to catch. Always bring plenty of water. If location is outdoors wear cleats, indoors tennis shoes.

V. CONDUCT POLICY

The league's objective is to provide a safe sporting activity that parents can register their children in with the expectation of having their child have fun while developing a better understanding of teamwork, sportsmanship and fair play. Simply said, this league is for the kids of our community, their enjoyment, their benefit, and their personal development.

In an effort to achieve such a program, it is unfortunate that we must establish common sense rules that every player, manager, coach, parent, and spectator associated directly or indirectly with the league must follow. By registering your child in Novato South Little League you have agreed to abide by the league's Conduct Policy. If for some reason you are not willing to live up to the policy, you are encouraged to withdraw your child from the league.

Our Conduct Policy for Players, Parents, and Managers/Coaches can be found on our website in the Documents section under Rules and Regulations. These policies are reviewed each year and updated if necessary. Note that if the policies are under revision, they may not be available until around March 1st of each year.

VI. TEAM AND MANAGER SELECTION

Team Selection

Below we have a high level overview of our selection process. Full details can be found in the Major and Minor rules located in the document section on our website.

Note: A full redraft will be performed every season in all divisions

Majors, Minor AAA, Minor AA Divisions

Each player league age 8 through 12 will be required to tryout in front of the Division Managers. Each manager will rate the players in the tryouts using whatever method they choose. The order of the draft will be drawn via hat pick.

Majors managers will conduct their draft first followed by Minor AAA then Minor AA. Players selected are removed from drafts at the lower levels.

Each team will consist of 12 players. The team that draws the 1 will take the first pick followed by the team in the number 2nd to the last position and so on until the last team selects a player. Once the last manager has selected his/her first player, he/she will begin the second round of picks and proceed backwards through the draft order. The draft will continue in this “serpentine” fashion until all Majors team rosters are filled.

Minor A

Players wishing to play in Minor A will be required to attend Evaluations. Each manager will rate the players in the tryouts using whatever method they choose. The order of the draft will be drawn via hat pick.

Note that these evaluations are conducted to form equal teams. These are not tryouts. All players who sign up for Minor A will be placed on a team.

T-Ball

Players are assigned to teams by the Player Agent who will when possible honor any special parent requests such as siblings, neighbors, etc.

Manager Selection

All managers and coaches are appointed annually by the league President, with the approval of the Board of Directors. Managers at the Minor and Majors levels must interview with the Selection Committee. The Selection Committee will consist of 2 to 3 sitting Board Members who are not applying to manage a team and 1 to 2 parents who are not on the board or applying to manage. The Committee will conduct the interviews and then make their recommendations to the Board.

All approved managers must undergo a full background check and are required to attend both mandatory Positive Coaching Alliance and on field trainings before their first practice.

VII. FIELD LOCATIONS

Dunphy Field

Hanger Ave and Caliente

Next to the park in Hamilton

Hamann Field

Olive School

629 Plum Street

Field is to the right from the school parking lot

Hamilton 1

Hamilton School

1 Main Gate Road

Field is closest to the school parking lot

Hamilton 2

Hamilton School

1 Main Gate Road

Field is closest to the gymnasium next to Hamilton School. Closest parking is in the gymnasium parking lot.

Olive 2 T-Ball

Olive School

629 Plum Street

Field is to the left from the school parking lot. This is the farthest field from the parking lot.

Pinheiro Field

Lu Sutton School

1800 Center Road

Rucker Field

Olive School

629 Plum Street

Field is to the left from the school parking lot. This is the closest field to the parking lot.

VIII. SAFETY CONCERNS

There's a reason why baseball has been called our national pastime for decades. It's as American as hot dogs and apple pie. It's been a summer tradition in big cities and little towns across the U.S.A. for generations. It's a great team sport, and it's fun.

Baseball is by no means a dangerous sport. But it can present a very real risk of injuries from things like wild pitches, dehydration, batted balls, collisions in the field, and overuse injuries.

We at NSLL make safety our top priority. In this section, we will outline our league safety guidelines and also give you the parents some tips on how you can help your player stay healthy, avoid injury, and have fun.

Novato South Little League is required to file a comprehensive Safety Plan with Little League International on a yearly basis. The Safety plan is available on our website in the documents section. All managers are required to attend safety and first aid training yearly. Each manager is given a first aid kit and a more comprehensive kit is available at each snack shack.

Safety Tips For Parents

Use the right equipment and check the condition of it frequently

- **Batting Helmets:** helmets are checked by the coaches and umpires frequently but you should also inspect them to ensure there are no cracks.
- **Catchers gear:** if you have purchased catchers gear check the helmet and shin guards frequently. Be sure that the chest protector is properly fitted and is not torn. Throat guards are mandatory for all helmets including hockey style helmets. Check to ensure it is properly installed and the ties are not torn or frayed.
- **Cleats:** be sure that the cleats fit properly and have no tears or damage. Ensure that the cleats themselves are not worn or broken.
- **Have your player avoid hand blisters by using batting gloves**
- **Bats:** frequently check for dents
- **Protective Cups:** The official rules state that “All male players must wear athletic supporters. Male catchers must wear the metal, fiber or plastic type cup, and a long-model chest protector.” However, even though the rule does not require any player other than the catcher to wear a protective cup, Novato South Little League **STRONGLY SUGGESTS THAT ALL MALE PLAYERS WEAR A PROTECTIVE CUP AT ALL TIMES DURING GAMES AND PRACTICES.** We cannot enforce the wearing of cups other than the catcher, so it is the parent’s responsibility for assuring that their son wears a protective cup at all times.

Ensure your player is properly hydrated

Dehydration and heat stroke are all too common in youth sports. Be sure your player is properly hydrated before each game and practice. Small personal water bottles are not sufficient especially

when it's hot. We highly recommend large thermos style containers that can hold a ½ gallon or more of water.

Avoid overuse injuries

Since young ball players are very enthusiastic about playing the game, they often do not report problems with their legs, elbow or shoulder. Therefore, to help improve the chances of early diagnosis and treatment, parents and coaches must pay attention to a number of early warning signs of impending injuries:

- Arm fatigue
- Arm soreness that persists for more than a day
- Shoulder or elbow stiffness and soreness with trouble "getting loose"
- Impaired throwing mechanics and/or poor batting performance
- Stiff legs when walking, limp or favoring of one leg

Should your player show symptoms of overuse, talk with your team Manager and have your player shut down until the symptoms subside. Missing a week or two of the season is certainly preferable to a major injury. Likewise avoid rushing your player back after an injury has occurred. Consult with your doctor and ensure they sign off on allowing your player back.

With the advent of travel ball, players have the option to play year round. Some even play travel ball during the Little League season. In our opinion, baseball was never meant to be a year round sport. Overuse injuries, especially for pitchers, are quickly growing to epidemic proportions.

Here are some tips to keep your players arm healthy

- Limit the amount of throwing that a child does at the start of the season.
- Build up arm strength and endurance gradually.
- Emphasize trunk strengthening as the support of the pitching motion.
- Don't graduate a child from throwing to pitching until the child is between ages 8 -10.
- Encourage a child to throw more overhead pitches.
- Pitchers under age 13-14 should focus on fastballs and changeups.
- A child should throw NO curve balls until age 13-14 at the earliest. Safe mechanics are difficult to master before this age.
- Play other sports throughout the year. Travel ball has a number of seasons each year. Take one or two off and play a different sport.
- If your player does play travel ball during the Little League season be absolutely sure your Novato South Manager knows every time your player has pitched and the exact pitch count. Be sure to do the same for your travel ball manager. The Little League Pitch Smart guidelines must be followed to protect your child's arm!

The Pitch Smart Program Guidelines

- Focus on athleticism, physical fitness, and fun
- Focus on learning baseball rules, general techniques, and teamwork
- Do not exceed 80 combined innings pitched in any 12 month period

- Take at least 4 months off from throwing every year, with at least 2-3 of those months being continuous
- Make sure to properly warm up before pitching
- Set and follow pitch-count limits and required rest periods
- Avoid throwing pitches other than fastballs and change-ups
- Avoid playing for multiple teams at the same time
- Avoid playing catcher while not pitching
- Avoid pitching in multiple games on the same day
- Play other sports during the course of the year
- Monitor for other signs of fatigue
- Pitchers once removed from the mound may not return as pitchers

Rest Guidelines

The following chart shows the mandatory rest guidelines for pitchers in Little League. These are enforced by the league for games but should be enforced for practice as well. Be sure your player follows these rules even when practicing in the back yard!

Age	Max Per Day
7-8	50
9-10	75
11-12	85
13-16	95
17-18	105
Pitches	Rest Days
1 - 20	0
21-35	1
36-50	2
51-65	3
66+	4

Don't let your children be the victim of abduction

As with any youth activity, there are bad people out there who are drawn to places where children are present. Follow these tips to keep your kids safe.

- Keep an eye out for anyone who looks like they don't belong or are acting suspicious
- When dropping your child off at practice or games be sure to watch them join the team
- Pick up your players on time! Our managers are instructed to stay until all players have been picked up however they are also responsible for resetting the field and locking up. Be on time!

Your player is not the only one to worry about. Younger siblings are perhaps at more risk.

- Do not allow younger siblings to leave your sight during games or practices
- Do not allow them to move to another part of the park or school while you are watching a game or practice

IX. POST SEASON AND ALL-STARS

One of the most frequently asked questions we get during the season is:

“How long is this season going to go???”

As summer approaches, parents want to know when they can plan for vacation or if the post season and/or All-Stars will conflict with plans they already made. Here’s a general guide to help.

Post Season Championships

Playoff Championship

Minor AA, Minor AAA, and Majors all have playoffs and championship games at the conclusion of the regular season which usually ends around the middle of May. Playoffs begin directly after the end of the season and go until the end of May.

City Championship

The Minor AAA and Majors team with the best record during the regular season will play in the City Championships against Novato North Little League. This tournament starts at the beginning of June and concludes a week later.

Tournament of Champions

The Minor AAA and Majors playoff champions will play in the District 3 Tournament of Champions against all of the other teams in District 3 (SF and Marin). This tournament will begin in the middle of June and conclude a week later.

All-Stars

For most people, the Little League World Series in Williamsport, Penn. – aka "The Road to Williamsport"– represents the ultimate climax of the Little League season. But the "Road to all-stars," where millions of kids and their families participate annually in postseason tournaments, can be just as important and exciting as the "Road to Williamsport."

Novato South Little League sends 3 teams to the Little League District 3 tournament which begins around June 20 or so and concludes in the middle of July:

9 Year All-Stars (Plays within our District 3 only) 10 Year All-Stars, 11 Year All-Stars, 12 Year All-Stars

These teams are composed of our strongest players who will play against the All-Stars representing the other teams in our district in a pool play and then double elimination tournament. Details of the selection of the team can be found in our Major Division Local Rules document on our website.

Each team has potentially different season lengths as only the 12 year old team is eligible to participate in the Little League World Series in Williamsport.

9, 10 and 11 Year All-Star Tournaments

Expect a game every 1 to 4 days and 2 to 3 practices a week.

First up is the District 3 tournament which starts around June 20 and goes to the middle of July.

The winner of this tournament then moves on to the Section 1 Championship. This usually goes from around July 15 to July 20 or so.

The Section 1 winner then proceeds to the Nor Cal State Tournament. This usually goes from around July 25th until August 1st.

That's it. You're done! Enjoy vacation!

12 Year All-Star Tournaments

Expect a game every 1 to 4 days and 2 to 3 practices a week.

First up is the District 3 tournament which starts around June 20 and goes to the middle of July.

The winner of this tournament then moves on to the Section 1 Championship. This usually goes from around July 15 to July 20 or so.

The Section 1 winner then proceeds to the Nor Cal State Tournament. This usually goes from around July 25th until August 1st.

The Nor Cal State winner then goes to the West Region Tournament in San Bernadino. This starts and the end of the first week of August and runs to the middle of August

The West Region winner then goes to the Little League World Series in Williamsport. This runs from August 20 to 30.

No vacation for you but you could be the Little League Champions.

Reality Check

The only District 3 team in history to make it as far as the Western Region Tournament was Novato Little League in 1965. They were eliminated and did not make it to Williamsport.

X. SPONSORS AND VOLUNTEERS

Novato South Little League is a non-profit organization run solely by volunteers. The vast majority of the working volunteers are our board members.

The Board of Directors has been elected into their positions by the membership of the league. This selection occurs every year at the league's annual meeting (normally in early September) and the Board appointments take effect October 1st and ends on October 1st of the next year. The number of board members is spelled out in our constitution. Any change to that number must be voted on by the league membership at the annual meeting. Only members can vote. There are several ways to become a member.

1. Submit a volunteer application for Managing, coaching, etc.
2. Pay membership dues of \$25 each year.

The purpose of the Board is to oversee the operation and funds of the league, making every effort within their collective powers to see that the value received by the players surpasses the monetary value of the player donations. These dedicated volunteers have put in countless hours organizing this league for the fun and development of our players.

If you would like to volunteer for the board, please send an email to our league address for more details on the process.

Sponsors are the life blood of our league. Without their kind and generous donations and participation we would not be able to provide a quality experience for our players. Our league obtains income in only a few ways:

1. Player fees
2. Membership dues
3. Snack Shack income (minus expenses)
4. Apparel store income
5. Fund raisers

These sources barely provide enough income to pay the many bills to operate each season.

Sponsorships are key in helping to provide uniforms and safety equipment for our players, scholarships to those in need, as well as maintaining and renting the fields where our children play.

By supporting the children of Novato South Little League, businesses will be seen by over 500 families in our program book, on our website, on player uniforms and on-the-field banners (at certain levels). Company banner ads and links remain on our website for a full calendar year – from January 1st through December 31st.

Our families would be happy to support the generous businesses that support Novato South Little League! All donations are tax-deductible.

Go to our website and click Sponsors -> Become A Sponsor on the top menu for full details.

XI. LEAGUE ACTIVITIES

Tryouts-(Player Evaluation)

In order to create balanced teams at all levels players are required to attend tryouts, the board will set times and dates for tryouts, managers and board members will evaluate players during tryouts in order to get well balanced teams.

Draft

The draft follows tryouts, at the draft players are placed on teams, All 12 yr old players and returning Major players will be placed on a major league team. Those players not drafted to a Majors team will be available for the AAA Minor draft (if of the proper league age). Those not drafted for a Minor AAA team will be placed in the draft for Minor AA teams. Minor A teams will also be drafted. The purpose of this draft is to make the teams even. All players who registered for Minor A WILL be placed on a team. Practice times and days will be assigned at the Draft. Team equipment will be passed out by the equipment manager around this time as well. Full details on the respective drafts can be found in the Documents section of our website in the Local Rules for each division.

Team Meetings

Each team must have a team parent meeting soon after the teams are formed. The team manager, arranges the team meeting. It is mandatory that at least one Board Member attend this meeting. It is the board's role to explain what their role is in Little League. The Parents Meeting is the board's best opportunity to communicate what is expected of them during the season and what is happening in our League. And to recruit Volunteers to help with League events.

Pictures

Team and Player pictures are scheduled early in season at "picture day" The team parent or Manager will hand out this information.

Snack Shack

NSLL operates several shacks at our fields. The shack is one of our main fundraisers and has been for many years. It is the main source of collecting funds to pay for our umpires. Teams will be required to work the shacks throughout the season (Minor AA through Majors).

Umpiring

NSLL has a combination of paid and volunteer umpires. We have an excellent training program for getting umpires prepared for the season. NSLL would love to increase our volunteer umpires.

Opening Day

Opening day ceremonies are at Hamann field. This is the start of the season and includes a mini parade and full ceremony including the throwing out of the first pitch. Games immediately follow.

Program Book

Each year we provide a program book that lists all the teams, players, volunteers and sponsors. Lots of other useful information is also included in the program book.

All-Stars

NSLL fields 3 all star teams, 9 year, 10 year, 11 year, 12 year old team, there is a process in place that can be found in our local rules that determines how players are selected, as well as managers and coaches. See the section above for more details.

Fundraisers

In the past, we have had numerous different types of fundraisers (raffle tickets, hit-a-thon and dinner dances. The selling of field banners and team sponsors are an excellent way to enlist the community and generate addition funds for the league.

Awards

It is a tradition in NSLL to give the Hamann sportsmanship award each year. This trophy is awarded to the Major player and Minor AAA player who demonstrates outstanding sportsmanship throughout the year. Players, managers and coaches vote on this award. There is also an award for home run king for Majors and Minor AAA and a Manager of The Year Award for each division.

Other Events

The league has several events that parents and players are encouraged to attend. Blood drive on opening day, foundation 21-softball game, Giants little league day. Other possible events are 12 Year old Banquet, Dog days, fall player development, and pre tryouts practice.

Board Meetings

Typically, the board meets once a month some months there will be 2 meetings, there are several committees that will meet and bring information to the board, there is also the Player Draft, All star selection, field days, first aid training, PCA training, manager and coach training and snack shack meeting.

Championship Saturday

This is the close of the regular season with the Majors, Minor AAA, and Minor AA championship games and award ceremonies in one action packed fun filled day.