

# INTERLOCK Rules & Regulations

## Ontario Districts 2, 6, 7 & 8

These Rules & Regulations apply to all MINOR, MAJOR, JUNIOR, and SENIOR divisions of Ontario District 2, 6, 7 and 8 INTERLOCK play.

**LAST UPDATED on Friday, June 23, 2017**

**New or Changed Items are in RED. See Pages 3, 4, and 6.**

### **NOTABLE CHANGES FOR 2017:**

- For the SUMMER Interlock ONLY, and only at Minor and Major, a new tier of play is added, that of "All-Star". Leagues' Tournament Teams should be entered in the All-Star tier. Other teams should be entered in Canadians or Nationals as appropriate. For Interlock play, All-Star teams may call-up players from Canadians and Nationals teams.
- Item 4: Each team above Minors may have a maximum of **15** players on its roster (**plus access to a taxi-squad**). When a league has two teams in one division, they may designate a taxi squad of at most 4 players who can be used by either team.
- Item 18: **For 2017 Summer Season only, as a pilot project, pitchers in the Minor Nationals tier (only) are permitted to pitch from 42 feet instead of 46 feet.**
- Item 20: **SENIOR CANADIANS and SENIOR NATIONALS are adopting the 5-run limit on a trial basis for 2017. This is by consensus vote of the Presidents on April 10, 2017.**
- Item 25: A time limit is imposed on all INTERLOCK regular season games. No inning is to begin more than **2 hours** after the *scheduled start time*. (**Used to be 2 hours and 15 minutes**).

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It is every coach's responsibility to be familiar with these Rules & Regulations. This document will always be available at the District 2 web site, <http://d2llontario.ca>.

The ROOKIE division has its own rules which are not in this document.

**The "Big League Replacement" or "Alumni 19U Program" has its own rules which are not in this document.**

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### **INTRODUCTION:**

The term "INTERLOCK" comes from the fact that here in Eastern Ontario, our Leagues are often so small that we cannot have a full schedule within one League, and therefore have to play teams from other Leagues, sometimes even with teams from neighbouring Districts. That is, we form an INTERLOCKING SCHEDULE with teams from different Leagues and Districts when we have to. Since each League may do things a little differently, one set of common rules is needed to govern INTERLOCK play.

There are at least 3 very good reasons that we follow rules, even if we don't agree with them:

1. We follow the rules because we agree to when we pay for the Charter granted to us by Little League.
2. We follow the rules so that no team can protest our teams' eligibility at any District, Provincial, National or World tournament.
3. We follow the rules so that there is no question that our players and volunteers are covered by Little League's insurance.

We don't normally change rules to make them less restrictive than the Little League rule books, especially if they would affect numbers 2 and 3 above, but we sometimes do change a rule to make it more restrictive.

Little League rules and regulations apply as stated in the current rule book, unless modified by one of the following rule changes and/or clarifications, for teams and divisions involved in INTERLOCK only.

Interlock play is run by the "Interlock Board", which consists of the District Administrators (D.A.s) for the Districts involved in Interlock play. The board will occasionally request advice and/or consensus from the Presidents of the Leagues involved in Interlock play. Under most circumstances, a D.A. will only vote on decisions affecting divisions in which his/her District has entered a team. An example of an exception to this is disciplinary hearings, in which it may be advantageous to have an outside opinion.

In the Official Rule book, the selection of options for some rules is left to "the Local League". Two examples of this are the selection of Age Alignment (page **40**), or the use of an unlimited runs last inning when using a 5-runs-per-inning limit (5.07, page **89**). For these purposes, the Interlock Board shall serve as "the Local League".

Recent (**2017 season**) Little League Rule Changes can be found online at this location:

<http://www.littleleague.org/learn/rules/rulechanges.htm>

Also, **pages 4 and 5** of the **2017** Little League rule book summarize this year's changes.

**PLEASE NOTE THE NEW "ONE FOOT MUST REMAIN IN THE BATTER'S BOX BETWEEN PITCHES" RULE STARTING IN 2017.**

### **Section A: REGULATIONS – Guidelines for INTERLOCK Teams**

1. **Play Nicely:** INTERLOCK and "Tournament Play" are two different Little League programs, although many Tournament players also participate in INTERLOCK in Spring and/or Summer. Every adult involved in a Little League game is a volunteer (coaches, umpires, scorekeepers, conveners, DA, ADA's, etc.) and all are contributing their time so that kids can have the experience of playing baseball. Keep it friendly. Think twice before you accuse someone of bias. It is in the best interest of everyone involved to be cooperative with each other.
2. **Seasons:** There are two INTERLOCK seasons: Spring INTERLOCK, which runs in May and June, and Summer INTERLOCK, which runs in July and August. Each of those seasons ends in a play-off. BIG LEAGUE has just one season, which runs from May thru August, with a play-off at the end.
3. **Conveners:** It is essential that INTERLOCK have a convener for each division (ROOKIE, MINOR, MAJOR, JUNIOR, SENIOR and BIG LEAGUE). The same convener can look after both the Canadians ("A") and Nationals ("B") **tiers (and in the summer Minors and Majors, the "All-Star" tier) in the same age group.** The convener should NOT be a coach although it can be someone who is associated with a team. It should be someone

who can communicate via email any day of the week. The convener will be responsible for:

- Creating the regular season schedule;
- Communicating information to the teams;
- Making sure each team promptly enters their game scores, pitch count, and participation data at the appropriate web site;
- Assisting the coaches involved in rescheduling rained out games;
- Keeping Official Standings (an effort will be made to ensure the web site is correct, but the convener will be the final arbiter);
- Scheduling and Overseeing the play-offs; and
- Delivering the trophies to the final game, arranging the presentations, and the taking of pictures of the finalists to be put on the INTERLOCK web site.

4. **Teams:** Any league in Districts 2 and 6 can enter one or more teams into each division in the Spring and/or Summer INTERLOCK leagues.
- Teams from Districts 7 and 8 will be considered for entry into INTERLOCK play on a case-by-case basis.
  - If a League enters only one team in a division, the League **MUST** enter it into the Canadians ("A") side, **unless it is a Minor or Major Tournament team, which must be entered in the All-Star tier.** The League's President may appeal this to the **Interlock Board (DAs with teams at that level)**, who may use their discretion to allow a League's single weak team to be entered into the Nationals ("B") division instead.
  - If a League enters more than one team in a division, the league must enter at least one team in the Canadians ("A") **division (or in Summer Interlock, Minor or Major, the "All-Star" tier).** It will be the League's option to make equal teams and enter them in Canadians ("A"), or to select the teams according to skill level or age and enter some in Canadians ("A") division and some in the Nationals ("B") division.
  - It is ESSENTIAL that each team have AT LEAST ONE person who can receive email any day of the week and be responsible for communicating information distributed that way to the rest of the team.
  - Each team must have a minimum roster size of 12, to prevent forfeits especially after districts. Exceptions \*may\* be granted by the Interlock Board if a good case can be made for it.
  - Each team above Minors may have a maximum of **15** players on its roster (**plus access to a taxi-squad**). When a league has two teams in one division, they may designate a taxi squad of at most 4 players who can be used by either team.

5. **Registration #1:**

All players must be officially registered during the current season. This means that a team may not use any player unless that player is properly registered as per the second Registration regulation below. (Name on roster and roster entered electronically through the District 2 website, <http://d2llontario.ca>.)

*Rationale:* This clarification ensures that players are properly registered so that they are playing on the correct team in the correct league, and are insured. It also prevents teams from adding a player to their roster at game time and later finding out they are ineligible and/or uninsured for some reason.

6. **Registration #2:**

All players on the regular roster and reserve must be registered by:

Spring INTERLOCK Season: May 20

Summer INTERLOCK Season: Jul 20.

In addition to each League and/or Districts Roster submission requirements, INTERLOCK requires that rosters must be entered by each team's manager using the Roster Entry form at the District 2 website, <http://d2llontario.ca>

The form will ask only for Name, Uniform Number, and a check box for whether the player is allowed to pitch. (For example, over-age players may not pitch).

*Rationale:* This puts a process in place to make sure that all players are properly registered, so there will be fewer questions about a player's eligibility for INTERLOCK and Tournament games.

NOTE: Each District and/or League may have additional Roster rules, such as submitting a roster which shows players' name, address, phone number and birth date, as well as the name and phone number of the manager and all coaches. For INTERLOCK, however, we require only those fields shown on the web site's form.

- For the summer INTERLOCK season, a summer player must also have been registered in Little League during the Spring season. Any players not meeting that standard who wish to register for Summer INTERLOCK should have their League administration contact their District Administrator.
7. **Fees:** In **2017**, there will be a fee of **\$70.00** for the Spring INTERLOCK season, as there will be trophies for the playoffs. For the Summer INTERLOCK season, registration fees will also be **\$70.00** per team to cover the cost of trophies **or other mementos**. Cheques should be made payable to: Ontario District 2 Little League. At the end of the Summer INTERLOCK season, an accounting of these monies will be sent to the President of each League involved in the summer program. The balance, if any, will remain in District 2's hands in a Summer INTERLOCK account for use next season. Any balance at the end of this season will be deemed to be jointly owned by the Districts whose teams contributed.
8. **Schedule:** If at all possible, each team must have two home fields per week to allow for flexibility in scheduling and making up rainouts, etc. Teams will have an equal number of home and away games during the season, and, if possible, will have one home and one away game per week (with some maneuvering around the District Tournament for Canadians ("A") divisions).
- Weekend double headers may be scheduled to accommodate games between teams that cannot travel to each other on weekdays.
  - A regular season will consist of 12 to 14 games per team.
  - INTERLOCK Play-offs are single elimination.
  - Spring INTERLOCK Regular season: May 1 to June 16 (To be confirmed).
  - Spring INTERLOCK Play-offs: Jun 18 to June 29 or earlier.
  - Summer INTERLOCK Regular season: July 3 to Aug 18 (To be confirmed).
  - Summer INTERLOCK Play-offs: Aug 20 to Aug 28 or earlier.
  - The schedules for all divisions and maps (or directions) to all fields are published on the District 2 website.

The Interlock Board reserves the option to set the start time of weekday games according to sunset time. Suggestions could be as early as 5:30 PM for May 1 to May 18, 6:00 PM for May 19 to July 27, and 5:30 PM for July 28<sup>th</sup> onwards.

9. **Home Team Responsibilities:**

The home team will:

- Supply at least 2 approved leather game balls for the level of play;
- Set up the field with bases;
- Arrange for a home plate umpire and at least one base umpire;
  - 1. TWO UMPIRES should be scheduled for each game. If on occasion, you have only one umpire show up for a game, you can ask for a volunteer from the spectators to do the bases if the opposing coach agrees. This may happen occasionally, and should NOT be a normal occurrence.
  - 2. If no umpires show up after a 30 minute wait, the home team will forfeit the game to the visiting team.
- Home teams may have the choice of dugouts they will use for their home games.
- JUNIOR teams will use the dimensions of the field that is being used by the home team for that home game in that League area.
- The home team will provide the OFFICIAL SCORER. Both teams shall track their own scores and pitch counts (see section 12 below) and report them to the web site (see section 10 below). Scorekeepers should confer during the game, but in

case of an irresolvable difference, the home team's scorekeeper will prevail.

**10. Reporting Game Results:**

Each team is to select an individual who will visit the District 2 web site, <http://d2llontario.ca>, and enter:

- score
- pitch counts
- player participation

as soon as possible after each game. An easy-to-use form is provided at the web site, which lists the team's players, and for each player has a box for pitch count and a check box to indicate whether the player played or not. The representatives of **both teams must submit the results** as **each team can only enter the results for their half of the game.**

**11. Rain-Outs and Re-Scheduling Games:** Do NOT ask another team to reschedule a game because your team cannot field a full team for whatever reason besides Tournament Play or Rain, however good you think that reason is.

- o If it is obvious that rain will make the field unplayable, the home team coach should call the opposing coach and the convener to report that the game must be cancelled. This must be done at least 1.5 to 2 hours before game time (depending on the distance the visitors are traveling), and should be done only in situations where it is very clear that the rain is not going to stop. Otherwise, both teams should report to the diamond.
- o Once both teams have arrived at the field, the decision remains with the coaches until the official game start time has been reached. At that time, the umpire shall become the sole judge as to when and whether a game must be suspended due to unsuitable weather conditions or the unfit condition of the playing field.
- o Rained out games or games not played as scheduled are to be made up as soon as conveniently possible to the two teams. The two coaches, with the help of the convener if necessary, should reschedule a rained out game, preferably within one week. (All games must be completed by the regular season end date as per the "Schedules" section, above). If agreement cannot be achieved by two coaches and the convener on the time and location, the District Administrator is to be notified by the teams involved and he will decide accordingly.

**12. Standings:** Each team will provide their own scorekeeper for the game. These scorekeepers should confer with each other to ensure that they agree on the score. After the game, the coach (or representative) of BOTH teams report game info as per the "Reporting Game Results" section above.

- o Standings will be computed as follows:
  1. Three points will be awarded for a win (including a win by forfeit).
  2. Two points will be awarded for a tie.
  3. One point will be awarded for a loss.
  4. No points will be awarded for a loss by forfeit.
  5. If a game cannot be played because a team is participating in the District Tournament or Provincial Tournament, it is the responsibility of the coach to inform the convener that the team is unavailable. The coaches involved should find a mutually suitable time to reschedule and inform the convener of the date. If the game has not been played by the end of the season, the game will be declared a tie with a 1-1 score.
  6. If a game is not played because one of the teams was unable to field at least 8 players, then this will be a forfeit with a score of 7-0 (6-0 in MINOR and MAJOR). Please note that games cancelled for any other reason except Tournament Play or RAIN will be forfeits.
- o There is no allowance in the standings for the fact that teams may have played different numbers of games.
- o TIEBREAKERS: If two or more teams are tied in the standings at the end of the season, the tie will be broken as follows:
  1. the winner of the regular season games between the teams

2. the team with the most wins
  3. the team with the better record against the highest placed team in the division, then the second highest placed team, etc., until the tie is broken.
  4. If breaking the tie will determine a spot in the "A" play-off as opposed to the "B" play-off, then criteria 1 and 2 only will be applied. If the teams are still tied, then a game will be played to determine which team gets the higher placing.
- If two teams which have had a game rained out are scheduled to meet in a House League weekend tournament, the tournament game can be used to replace the rained out game, only if both coaches agree and the convener has been informed. (There are no more "double-the-points" games).
  - The official standings will be kept by the convener. Every effort will be made to make sure that the standings that appear on the website are correct.

### 13. Play-offs:

- In divisions with more than 7 teams, teams will be divided into an "A" side and a "B" side. Conveners are granted the flexibility to draw the line through the standings to create the "A" and "B" sides, though it is suggested that over .500 teams should be on the "A" side, and under .500 teams should be on the "B" side; teams that finish exactly .500 could be placed on either side.
- Notwithstanding the above, in the case of an unbalanced schedule, where teams may not play all other teams and/or play teams in its own league many more times than teams from other leagues, the Conveners may not to split into "A side and "B" side, and instead just run one large playoff.
- The play-off format for each side is a single-elimination play-down.
- Trophies will be awarded to the Champions and Runners-up on each side.
- All play-off games are sudden death. Extra innings must be played if the game ends in a tie. Tied games cut short by darkness, curfew or rain must be continued as soon as possible.
- The team with the higher place finish in the regular season will be the home team for any play-off game.
- The games will be scheduled by the convener in consultation with the coaches. It is understood that the games will be played at the earliest time that a field is available, but, unless absolutely unavoidable, teams will not be required to play more than two INTERLOCK League play-off games in a week.
- Playoff games will sometimes be scheduled on Sundays and Fridays, even if there were no Sunday or Friday games during the regular season
- **Play-off Eligibility:** INTERLOCK play-offs will now have a player regular season games-played requirement of 50%, similar to that required by Little League for Tournament play (raised to 60% in 2008. See Tournament Rules, "Player Eligibility", **page 124** in the **2017** rule book). For "B" or Nationals divisions, the eligibility requirement is reduced to 40%. NO allowance will be made for games missed due to participation in other (non-Little League) baseball programs.  
*Rationale:* It is unfair for a team at the end of an INTERLOCK season to come up with players from other baseball programs in time for the play-offs.
  1. Example: If a team's INTERLOCK regular season schedule is 12 games, a player must participate in 6 games to be eligible for the INTERLOCK play-offs. Participation is tracked on the District 2 web site. The Games Played requirement is rounded UP if the team plays an odd number of games. (6 GP for a player whose team plays 11 games, 7 GP for a player whose team plays 13 games.)

### 14. Protests, Ejections and Other Incidents:

Please attempt to avoid protests. Every Protest, Ejection and other Incident must be reported the same evening it happens, and certainly before the team's next scheduled game.

- **Protests:** Please see Official Rule 4.19 regarding protests. By that rule, protests are allowed, though we **actively discourage** them in INTERLOCK play. In the event of a protest, the umpires will deal with it on field as per rule 4.19. Play will

not be suspended for a protest; teams will simply do what the umpire directs them to do, and the protest will be treated as incidents for review (by the Protest/Incident Committee) after the game is over.

- The umpire of the game, and the coach, and/or any other interested party, making the protest, reporting an ejection, or providing witness to an incident, should separately report this to the Protest/Incident Committee by submitting an Incident Report via the form provided on the District 2 web site, <http://d2llontario.ca>.
- The form will automatically e-mail the Incident Report to the Protest/Incident Committee, which consists of District Administrators (or their delegates) of those Districts involved in the INTERLOCK. The District Umpire Consultant(s) may also receive the Incident Report.
- An ejected player or coach is automatically suspended from the team's next physically played game at any level, whether it be for Tournament play or an INTERLOCK game. Rain-outs do not void the penalty. See also "Ejections" in the RULES section below.
- Additional penalties may be imposed by the Protest/Incident Committee if the situation warrants, or by the player's or coach's League.

15. **Lightning & Storms:** For games where lightning and severe storms may be imminent, umpires and coaches should abide by the Little League Canada Lightning Protocol Tournament Guidelines.

### **Section B: RULES - Clarifications of Official Rules as applied to INTERLOCK**

16. **Age:** (see Section IV(a), **pages 32-35**, and AGE ALIGNMENT, page **37**, of the **2016** Little League rule book)

We follow all Little League age guidelines, with slight modifications for over-age and under-age players in some instances.

*Rationale:* We follow age rules to keep our players eligible for Tournament play, among other things. However, it is better to have a Tournament-ineligible player in interlock play than not if it means a team can play rather than forfeit or not exist at all.

- We follow the Little League rule using age determination rules as **in pages 36-40** (and see the table on page **161** of the **2017** rule book), and the alignment they call "League A", so that ages 7 & 8 are ROOKIE, (**Rookie Nationals/B will allow 6-year-olds**), 9 & 10 are MINOR, 11 & 12 are MAJOR, 13 & 14 are JUNIOR, and 15 & 16 are SENIOR.
- **Over-Age Exception:** Leagues may request (from the D.A. or group of D.A.s involved in INTERLOCK play) approval to use over-age players if the League has no team at the division these players belong to. **The D.A. decision will be final, and he/she/they may impose a limit on the number of over-age players allowed on a team.**
- **Under-Age Exception:** Under-age players may only be used on a call-up basis, subject to the next clarification ("Call-ups").

17. **Call-ups:** (see Section IV(a), pages **30-31** of the **2016** Little League rule book)

Call-ups are permitted as per the rules, with notes below.

*Rationale:* **Call-ups are used to prevent forfeits. They are not to be used for a strategic advantage to the team or for the benefit of the player's development.**

- **The call-up rule has changed over the years. From 2006 thru 2016, Major players who played even one Junior regular season game lost their eligibility for the Major Tournament team.** The verbiage was this (see page 33 of the 2016 rule book): "If a player is selected to and participates in one or more regular season games on a Junior League team, he/she will be ineligible to participate in the Major Division from that point forward in regular season and/or tournament play." **This has been removed for the 2017 season. On page 37 of the 2017 rule book, it indicates that players aged 12 may now participate in Junior**
- The normal use of the call-up rule is to prevent forfeits by allowing a Canadians ("A") team to call up players from the Nationals ("B") team, and allowing both

Canadians ("A") and Nationals ("B") teams to call up players from the Canadians ("A") team from the division below, ~~with the exception of not allowing MAJOR to JUNIOR call-ups.~~ **(Exception removed for 2017 season).**

- A Canadians ("A") player can only be used on a Nationals ("B") team if it is at the next higher age group, ~~with the exception for JUNIOR as above.~~ **(Exception removed for 2017 season).**
- **In SUMMER INTERLOCK, in Minor and Major All-Star tiers, teams may call up players from either Canadians or Nationals teams.**
- Players can only be called up if it does not interfere with their own team schedule, and their coach approves the call up.
- Players called up are not eligible to pitch.
- **Call-downs: There are no call-downs allowed, as all levels have the ability to do call-ups now that the Major to Junior exception has been removed for 2017.**
- No player may be used who is not a regular member of a District 2/6/7/8 Interlock roster.
- Call-ups may only be used to bring the game day lineup to a maximum of 10 players. Any team which has 10 or more of its players present may not use a call-up.
- A manager using one or more call-ups must identify those call-ups to the opposing manager prior to the start of the game.
- There is no longer an Official Rule that says if a player is called up more than 5 times in the season, they will be added to the roster of the higher team, and will not be eligible to play on the team to which they were originally assigned. This was once the case, but there were instances of coaches and/or families trying to abuse this rule in order to get a child "moved up" despite a League's age alignment policies.
- Managers do not get to pick who they call up; that is supposed to be done by the League's Player Agent. Little League rules recommend the use of a pool of players on regular season teams who would be willing to play extra games as call-ups. See Regulation V, item c, "Alternate Method of Operation" on page 41 of the 2017 rule book.
- For Interlock purposes, we do not allow any player to be called up more than 5 times during an Interlock season. Again, this is because call-ups are not for the strategic advantage of the team, nor for the development of the player. They are only to prevent forfeits. Spread the call-ups around the eligible players.

18. **Pitchers:** (see Section VI, **pages 42-44 of the 2017** Little League rule book)

We will follow the rule book pitching rules.

*Rationale:* They protect young arms, they protect our players' eligibility, and they will give more children a chance to pitch.

- As per part 'a' of this section, all players (clarification: except "call-ups" and over-age players) are eligible to pitch in a game.
- As per part 'a' of this section, there is no restriction on the number of pitchers that can be used in a game.
- As per part 'c' and 'd' of this section, the new Pitch Count rule will be followed scrupulously.
- **For 2017 Summer Season only, as a pilot project, pitchers in the Minor Nationals tier (only) are permitted to pitch from 42 feet instead of 46 feet.**
- **The following three notes have changed since 2008:**
  1. NOTE: In 2008, Little League instituted a "Game of Rest" policy for some pitch counts. In 2009, Little League gave us the option of using an extra calendar day of rest instead of the game of rest. **This was removed as of 2010. There is no longer a game of rest, but calendar days of rest MUST be observed.**
  2. NOTE: In 2008, Little League instituted a policy so that a player who throws one pitch is not eligible to play the position of catcher for the rest of the day. In 2009, Little League has eased this restriction a bit, so that



a pitcher may go to the catcher position if he/she has thrown fewer than 41 pitches.

3. NOTE: In 2011, Little League has added a rule that a player who has played the position of catcher for 4 or more innings is ineligible to pitch for the rest of the day. (Regulation VI 'c' 3 NOTE 1, on page 37 of the 2011 Little League rule book.)
- NOTE: Unlike the years prior to "Pitch Count", when pitchers were allowed a certain number of innings per week, the Days/Games of Rest clock does NOT reset at the end of the week.
- **Here are some examples of what a "Calendar Day of Rest" means.**

Day Pitched	Days of Rest Required	Next Eligible Day
Sunday	1	Tuesday
Monday	1	Wednesday
Tuesday	1	Thursday
Wednesday	1	Friday
Thursday	1	Saturday
Friday	1	Sunday
Saturday	1	Monday
Sunday	2	Wednesday
Monday	2	Thursday
Tuesday	2	Friday
Wednesday	2	Saturday
Thursday	2	Sunday
Friday	2	Monday
Saturday	2	Tuesday
Sunday	3	Thursday
Monday	3	Friday
Tuesday	3	Saturday
Wednesday	3	Sunday
Thursday	3	Monday
Friday	3	Tuesday
Saturday	3	Wednesday
Sunday	4	Friday
Monday	4	Saturday
Tuesday	4	Sunday
Wednesday	4	Monday
Thursday	4	Tuesday
Friday	4	Wednesday
Saturday	4	Thursday

19. **Metal cleats:** (see Rule 1.11(h), **page 66 of the 2017** Little League rule book)  
District 2 is now permitting metal cleats to be worn by its JUNIOR and SENIOR players during the Spring INTERLOCK season. Coaches are encouraged to teach those players who are new to metal cleats how to run and slide in them. Players are reminded that infractions involving intentionally dangerous or intimidating use of metal cleats will be dealt with harshly.
20. **Run Limit:** (see Rule 2.00, "INNING", **page 73 of the 2017** Little League rule book)  
We follow the official rules regarding Run Limits (with one possible exception), keeping in mind that we also follow a Mercy Rule which would take priority.
  - MAJOR, JUNIOR,: There is no limit to the number of batters or runs scored in an inning (unless the Mercy Rule is invoked), unless an exception is made at some level by consensus vote of the League Presidents involved in INTERLOCK. **Such a decision was made starting in 2008 for the NATIONALS ("B") levels only. (See third bullet point of this item.)**

- MINOR: (Both CANADIANS ("A") and NATIONALS ("B"), **and in SUMMER, ALL-STARS**) A team may score a maximum of 5 runs in an inning (unless the Mercy Rule is invoked first). The half inning is declared over as soon as the 5th run crosses the plate.
- NATIONALS ("B") – all Levels (MINOR, MAJOR, and JUNIOR): This exception is unique to our INTERLOCK. A team may score a maximum of 5 runs in an inning (unless the Mercy Rule is invoked first). The half inning is declared over as soon as the 5th run crosses the plate. **This is by consensus vote of the Presidents in 2008.**
- JUNIOR CANADIANS ("A") SPRING INTERLOCK adopted the 5-run limit as above on a trial basis for the spring season, before making this a permanent change and in summer too. This is by consensus vote of the Presidents in 2012.
- Due to the success of the above trial, at the Summer Interlock meeting it was voted to continue the practice in JUNIOR CANADIANS ("A") SUMMER INTERLOCK too.
- **SENIOR CANADIANS ("A") AND SENIOR NATIONALS ("B") SPRING INTERLOCK adopted the 5-run limit as above on a trial basis for both the spring and summer seasons of 2017, before making this a permanent change. This is by consensus vote of the Presidents in 2017.**
- **To summarize, there is now a 5-run per inning at the following levels:**
  1. **MINOR ALL-STARS, CANADIANS ("A") and MINOR NATIONALS ("B")**
  2. **MAJOR NATIONALS ("B") only**
  3. **JUNIOR CANADIANS ("A") and JUNIOR NATIONALS ("B")**
  4. **SENIOR CANADIANS ("A") and SENIOR NATIONALS ("B") (On a trial basis for 2017)**
- NOTE on Run Limits: In 2010, an option to rule 5.07 (page 89 in the 2017 Little League rule book) was re-introduced to allow the local League to choose to let the final inning be "unlimited runs". The Interlock Board has chosen NOT to use this option. The final inning is not treated differently than previous innings, with respect to run limits. If a game gets to the last inning, and one team is ahead by more than the run limit (5), and less than the mercy rule limit (10), teams are still required to play the last inning until the game is properly completed, which means the visiting team will bat in the top of the inning, and the home team will bat in the bottom of the inning unless or until they are ahead, or until the run limit is reached. This is required for at least 3 reasons:
  1. It is consistent with the implementation of the run limit in Minors.
  2. Our players have paid money so that they can play baseball, so let's give them all the playing time to which they are entitled.
  3. A coach is not allowed to shorten the game (Official rule 4.15 items (2) and (6)) and must take the field when directed by the umpire.

21. **Defensive Substitutions:** (see Rule 3.03, page 77-78 of the 2017 Little League rule book)  
 District 2 chooses to override this rule to allow for (almost) unlimited defensive substitution. Players can be substituted in the field at any time during the game except for the pitcher. Once the pitcher has been removed, he/she can still play in any other position, but may not re-enter the game as a pitcher.

- Note that while there is no mandated "equal play rule" for the INTERLOCK program, teams are encouraged to have this as a team rule.

22. **Batting Order:** (see Rule 4.01 and 4.04, pages 81 & 82 of the 2017 Little League rule book)  
 As permitted by this rule, INTERLOCK adopts the policy of continuous batting order. Therefore, each player present at the game will be in the batting order. Any player who comes late to the game may be added to the bottom of the batting order, including continuation games.

Clarification: Note 2 in rule 4.04 is for Tee-Ball & Minor. In Interlock play we extend it also to Majors thru Seniors (as there is no guidance in the rule book for these cases): when a

player is injured, becomes ill, or must leave the game site after the start of the game, the team will skip over him/her when his/her time at bat comes up without penalty. (i.e. There is *\*no\** automatic out). If the injured, ill, or absent player returns he/she is merely inserted into their original spot in the batting order and the game continues.

In Continuation of a suspended game: As above, players present for the first part but not for the continuation will be skipped in the batting order without penalty. Players who were not present in the first part but are now present for the continuation will be added at the bottom of the lineup regardless of where the current spot in the batting order is.

23. **Base Coaches:** (see Rule 4.05, page **82** of the **2017** Little League rule book)  
INTERLOCK play **changed** in 2008 to follow the official rule. We will now allow two adult base coaches on the field. However, this is possible only if there is 1 adult on the bench at all times.
24. **Ejections:** (see Rule 4.07, page **82** of the **2017** Little League rule book)  
If a player or coach is ejected from a game, the player or coach is automatically suspended for the team's next **physically played** INTERLOCK regular or play-off game, **or District Tournament** game, and must leave the field as stated in the rule.  
*INTERLOCK addition:* A player or coach ejected for a second or subsequent time during league play is suspended for the next two games, including play-offs, or as determined by the league administrator.
25. **Game Length and Curfew:** (see Rule 4.10(a), page **83** of the **2017** Little League rule book)  
JUNIOR/SENIOR: A complete game is 7 innings (6 1/2 if the home team is ahead. A regulation game must have 5 innings complete (4 1/2 if the home team is ahead).  
MINOR/MAJOR: A complete game is 6 innings (5 1/2 if the home team is ahead. A regulation game must have 4 innings complete (3 1/2 if the home team is ahead).  
*Additional INTERLOCK clarifications/modifications of this rule:*
- INTERLOCK will allow tie scores in the INTERLOCK regular season, if the game has reached regulation length and is then called due to curfew or weather. (This overrides Rule 4.12)
  - INTERLOCK regular season games will be a maximum of 7 innings for INTERMEDIATE, JUNIOR and SENIOR, and a maximum of 6 innings for MINOR and MAJOR.
  - All games are scheduled to begin promptly at **the time indicated on the schedule**. Typical start times are 6:00 without lights, or 8:15/8:30 with lights, but there are other start times as well. Refer to the schedule.
    - Fifteen minutes grace should be allowed for the arrival of late players. (More time may be granted at the umpires' and opposing team's discretion).
  - A time limit is imposed on all INTERLOCK regular season games. No inning is to begin more than **2 hours and 15 minutes** after the *scheduled start time*.
  - Games may be ended earlier (especially in May) **at the sole discretion of the umpire**, due to darkness.
  - No inning should begin unless there is a reasonable expectation of completing that full inning.
  - When there is another game scheduled immediately following the current game, whether it be another Interlock game or another league's game, we must respect that booking. Umpires are asked to stop play and clear the field & dugouts at least 5 minutes before the start time of the next game.
  - On a field with lights where another team has a permit for a subsequent game or practice, the Little League game must end at least 10 minutes before the start time on the next game permit.
  - For a late game on a field with lights on an automatic timer, a curfew is imposed: the game must end at least 10 minutes before the time the lights are scheduled to turn off.

- If an inning is incomplete when darkness, rain or curfew ends the game, then the score reverts to the last complete inning UNLESS the home team is at bat and has tied or gone ahead during this partial inning, in which case the score at the time the game is called stands.
  - **The curfew or time limit does NOT apply to the INTERLOCK play-off games, which must be played through to completion and a winner is determined. However, playoff games may still end 'early' if called by the umpire on account of darkness or rain, or because the lights go off, or another game is scheduled.**
26. **Mercy Rule:** (see Rule 4.10(e), page **84** of the **2017** Little League rule book)  
*Clarification:* INTERLOCK chooses to use this optional mercy rule. As allowed under rule 4.10(e): MINOR/MAJOR: If after 4 innings (3 1/2 innings with the home team ahead) one team is leading by 10 or more runs, the game shall be declared over. JUNIOR/SENIOR/BIG LEAGUE: If after 5 innings (4 1/2 innings with the home team ahead) one team is leading by 10 or more runs, the game shall be declared over. The official score is the score at the time the Mercy Rule takes effect, even if the coaches choose to play out the game as exhibition or practice.
27. **Lineup Size:** (see Rules 4.16 and 4.17, page **87** of the **2017** Little League rule book). There will be no maximum number of players allowed per game, so all players on the roster may be dressed for a game. We do make a change to allow for teams to play with as few as 8 players.
- A coach must never ask a healthy player to miss a game for any reason.
  - INTERLOCK, in the interest of preventing forfeits, has decided to override rule 4.16 and allow an 8 player minimum. A team must have eight (8) players dressed to play the game.
  - There will be no automatic out for a 9th player when playing with an 8 player lineup.
  - Less than 8 players present results in a game forfeiture.
  - If, during the game, an injury or ejection causes the number of available players to fall to 8 players, the remaining eight (8) players dressed will continue to play the game. There will be no automatic out for a 9th player no longer in the game due to the injury or ejection.
  - If, during the game, an injury or ejection causes the number of available players to fall below 8, this will result in a forfeit regardless of the point in the game or the score at the time.
28. **Mound visits:** (see Rule 8.06(d), page **114** of the **2017** Little League rule book)  
 For the SUMMER INTERLOCK season, we will follow the official rule, which allows players other than the pitcher to visit with the manager on the mound. Umpires are reminded that regardless of which player is being visited that (a) it counts as a visit to the pitcher, and (b) visits are to be kept to a reasonable (and short) length of time.  
 For the SPRING INTERLOCK season, the defensive coach or manager shall be permitted to visit **only** with the battery (pitcher & catcher) to discuss strategy.  
*Rationale:* This is done to prevent the use of player visits as a "stalling" tactic, by having, for example, an outfielder come in for a visit.
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## **APPENDIX A: Little League Canada Lightning Protocol**

Tournament directors are responsible for ensuring that the organizing committee and volunteers are aware of the Little League Canada Lightning Protocol, and what to do when lightning threatens a tournament site.

This protocol is based upon Environment Canada standards. Each situation is different, and local knowledge of weather patterns, and access to local forecasters is the key to safety. These are general guidelines to follow when lightning threatens.

1. Watch for Severe Weather. Keep an eye on the sky. Observe what direction the storm appears to be traveling. Lightning can strike several kilometres from the storm. Environment Canada maintains a warning system on their website with local information, so if possible, access to the Internet should be available at the tournament site. Alternately, have the local phone number for Environment Canada available for consultations. The website warning system is at:  
[http://weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca/warnings/warnings\\_e.html](http://weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca/warnings/warnings_e.html)
2. Observe the 30-30 rule. If thunder is heard 30 seconds or less after lightning is observed, the storm is less than 10 kilometres away. Precautions should be taken. Do not resume play until 30 minutes after the last lightning strike in the area.
3. Have a Lightning Safety Plan. Find a safe place where you can wait out the storm, preferably in a building or a vehicle. Keep a cell phone for emergencies. Download and print a copy of the Lightning Safety Tips from Environment Canada's web site:  
[http://www.msc.ec.gc.ca/education/lightning/index\\_e.html](http://www.msc.ec.gc.ca/education/lightning/index_e.html)

An action plan should be established in advance for all persons involved. The tournament safety officer, or a designated person, should monitor the weather to initiate the evacuation process when appropriate. Monitoring should begin days and even hours ahead of an event. Safer sites must be identified beforehand, along with a means to route the people to these locations.

4. You know your area of the country the best. In Canada, lightning is most frequent in southern Ontario, southern Saskatchewan and the foothills of Alberta. In northern Canada and most of British Columbia, lightning is less common.

For further information on what to do when lightning is a threat, particularly in those areas of the country where summer storms are common, check out the Lightning Safety Tips for the Public at:

**[http://www.msc.ec.gc.ca/education/lightning/safetypublic\\_e.html](http://www.msc.ec.gc.ca/education/lightning/safetypublic_e.html)**