

South Ottawa Little League  
Spring Season  
Coach and Team Coordinator Handbook

[www.southottawalittleleague.ca](http://www.southottawalittleleague.ca)

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# SOLL Spring Season Coach and Team Coordinator Handbook

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## Getting Started

### Volunteers

South Ottawa Little League (SOLL) is run by dedicated volunteers. It takes several people to run a team smoothly and avoid undue pressure on any one person. The coaching staff is made up of a Head Coach and at least one assistant. Most teams engage a second assistant coach, and possibly a third assistant especially for practices and for times when other coaches are unavailable. Having a number of people involved helps more people learn about the coaching role and groom future coaches.

In addition to the coaching staff, game controller and pitch count keeper (where applicable) and scorekeeper are useful roles to have in place. In blastball and tball it may not be necessary to have as many coaches and score keepers and game controllers are not needed.

**We strongly recommend that coaches recruit a team coordinator** to handle team logistics such as emailing parents, collecting prc's, booking the batting cage, assisting with events such as opening day and spring tournament. In addition, teams often designate one person to keep pitch count during games (minors and up), and another one to keep score (cp and up).

The head coach and team coordinator should meet to discuss team details as soon as possible. Communication between the head coach and the team coordinator is crucial.

### Game Controller

In divisions where game controllers are required, the visiting team provides a person to fulfill this role.

In 2010 Little League mandated that adult umpires be used at every game. This was designed to address an unacceptable level of abuse toward umpires, especially young umpires. Many leagues including SOLL could not attract sufficient adult umpires to fulfill this requirement. Subsequently in 2011 Little League mandated that where the plate umpire is under age (18 in Ontario), that an adult be designated game controller. The visiting team is required to designate a person in this role.

The purpose is to have an adult be available during games to support umpires, particularly young and first year umpires. At times coaches and/or spectators can get carried away in the excitement of the game and treat an umpire unfairly by yelling, gesturing or in some way unduly harassing the umpire. In the event this occurs or if for any reason the game feels the umpire needs some support, they should take a moment – hopefully between innings, to encourage and support the umpire. They should not overtake – the umpire is in charge. The game controller should know basic rules such as when a game is called due to weather/darkness. However, they are not to advise the umpire on the rules or second guess the umpire's judgment. In fact, they should not express their opinion on calls the umpire has made. Neither are they expected to engage in confrontations with coaches or fans. They are encouraged to report anything significant to the convenor or President.

The game controller should identify themselves to the umpire before the game starts. Little league rules do not permit a game to be played without a game controller, so the visiting team should do everything possible to make sure a capable adult is designated for this role. Board members and convenors may act in this role also.

### **Scorekeeper**

The home team will provide the scorekeeper.

### **Team Meeting/Team Fees**

Communication between coaches and parents is important. We strongly suggest you have a parent/coach meeting at opening day, during the first week – or maybe both. Here are a few things to consider for the agenda:

-overall philosophy of spring ball; introduce coaches and team coordinator – or recruit for these roles – reinforce background of coaches; practices, 2 way communication of concerns/player information between coach and parents; role of parents; significant rules/playing information esp for new players or those transitioning between divisions (hard ball, pitch count..) Communication – emails, website, rained out games.

Team fees are not usually collected for spring ball, and we suggest that teams do not collect money from parents. Each player and coach receives a tee shirt, team photo and a trophy at the end of the season. We do encourage post game team building which might involve a stop for ice cream on the way home, or breakfast or lunch after practice. Such things can be done user pay.

### **T Shirts**

Each player receives a tee shirt and a hat. We ask that players wear their shirts – sponsors have paid for their company name to be on the shirts with the expectation that players wear them. When handing out shirts, be sure to take a minute to organize the shirts in order by size noticing that in most divisions there are youth sizes and adult sizes. Don't hand out by favourite or lucky numbers – suggest players get a new number and make it famous. The ideal situation is to hand out shirts with as many players as possible present all at once. Don't start your allocation with small and work up. Players tend to take shirts that are too big, and then you are in trouble when you don't have any large ones left for the bigger players. Keep extra shirts incase players are added to your team.

### **Paperwork**

Anyone in ongoing contact with players is required to have a police record check(prc). This means all coaches on the roster and any who will be in the dugout or significantly involved with players should have a prc. The police require applicants to attend a police station to drop off the application and have the two pieces of required identification validated. The application is available on our league's website

or on the Ottawa Police website. Locations for drop off and office hours can also be accessed on the police site. It takes approximately 3-4 weeks for the prc to be processed; it is returned to the applicant by mail. Coaches are required to then submit a copy to the division convenor or league safety officer.

A valid prc is one with an issue date within one year of the coaching time period, so to be eligible for spring 2012 the prc must have an issue date no earlier than mid June 2011. Existing prc's (ie: for hockey) may be submitted instead of doing a new one as long as the issue date is acceptable.

## **Rules**

**House league rules** are posted on the website. **Little league rules** are published in a booklet copies of which are provided to each team. Coaches and team coordinators should read and understand the rules and where clarification is needed consult the division convenor. Divisions that play an interlock schedule with other leagues should consult the district website to access applicable rules.

## **At The Field**

### **Practices**

Practices are a necessary part of learning to play sports. In coach pitch and below, practices are built into the structure of the program. In minors, majors, juniors and seniors coaches are encouraged to hold practices – game play is not sufficient for players to develop their skills. Practice plans are available from convenors and are handed out at the coaches meetings. Coaches may also call on the league's Director of Coaching to discuss how to run an effective practice.

Players and coaches are expected to be at the field at least 30 minutes before game time in order to prepare and warm up. Coaches should delegate tasks such as diamond preparation, getting equipment out of the bag etc in order to spend time with players in warm up. In addition to coaches, parents can be recruited to assist in warm up drills.

Usually, diamonds in the area are not so busy that coaches have a hard time finding an open diamond. In the past we have booked a lot of extra diamond time only to see them not used and money spent for nothing. Convenors will communicate the times our league has reserved diamonds. Coaches can use diamonds on a first to show up gets to use it basis. Teams are encouraged to share diamonds and/or have a joint practice when necessary.

## **Posting Game Scores & Attendance**

Home teams are required to post game scores on the website within 2 days of the game. Each team enters their own pitch counts and records player participation. Each team is supplied with a password by our webmaster. Any discrepancies should be reported to the convenor.

Spring players are required to play in a minimum of 60% of the spring games in order to be eligible to tryout for summer ball. Therefore recording participation is very important. Please also keep game sheets.

## **Equipment**

Each team is provided with an equipment bag with equipment appropriate to an average team in the division. There will be a supply of practice balls and game balls. Please try hard to return all balls at the end of the season – we use these as practice balls for the following season.

If you require additional or different equipment, or if something breaks please tell your convenor. Players frequently bring their own bats which is permitted – keep in mind the rule that any such bats are to be accessible to all team members.

## **Equipment Boxes**

At each field there is a green equipment box containing bases, umpire's equipment, instant ice packs and a first aid kit. If any supplies, such as ice packs run out, please inform the convenor. Every head coach will be given a key in return for a \$10 deposit refundable when the key is returned at season's end. Additional keys can be provided to assistant coaches on request.

## **Batting Cage**

The batting cage at Canterbury is available for teams to practice. Information on how to book and how to use the cage are located on the website.

## **Umpire Scheduler**

Contact information for our umpire scheduler is on the website under the umpire tab.

## **Events**

### **Opening Day**

Opening Day is a fun get together. Players, coaches and parents get a chance to meet one another prior to the first game. Details are posted on the website - coaches or team coordinators should contact families upon receiving their rosters and can should mention opening day. Information is also posted on the website. Coaches are asked to arrive by 11:30am to set up and organize tshirts.

Each team will receive their tshirts at the event and coaches are asked to hand them out to players. It can be a good time for coaches to have a brief meeting with parents and players to answer initial questions. Teams might want to bring gloves and throw the ball around; some may want to head out to a nearby diamond for a short practice, particularly in older divisions. Blastball players have fun getting used to running to the base and making it blast.

Hot dogs and drinks will be for sale at the event with all proceeds going to the league.

### **Spring Tournament**

The spring tournament is held on one day at the end of May and is a chance for house league players to experience a tournament. It's a day intended primarily for fun and good spirited competition. Games are short. The league and convenors organize the tournament and will communicate with teams in advance to confirm details. Each team will be asked to recruit one or two volunteers to run food stations and carry out other tasks. Blastball and Tball have their own event on a separate day and time in June. Juniors teams in tiered divisions playing an interlock schedule will not usually participate in the tournament, nor do Seniors and Big League divisions.

### **Photo Day**

Photo day is held in mid May. A schedule will be provided to teams and posted on the website. Each player receives a team photo as part of their registration fee. Families need to go to the photographer's website to download an information sheet and to view photo selections available - additional photos can be ordered at a cost and must be indicated on the form. Each family is asked to complete the information sheet and bring to photo day in order to ensure photos are returned to the right teams.

It's important for teams to be on time for their allocated time slot. The league will not reorganize the schedule to accommodate teams unable to attend their time. If absolutely necessary, teams may switch times with other teams but must organize it themselves and be sure to notify the convenors of the change.

### **Playoffs**

Every team makes the playoffs. The format depends on the number of teams in the division and is indicated in the House League Rules. There are no playoffs in blastball and tball. Instead this division holds a carnival at the end of the season.

## **Miscellaneous**

### **Trophies**

Every player gets a trophy on their last game of the playoffs. Convenors will deliver to the field or to coaches involved prior to the game. Teams are encouraged to line up on the base lines and conduct a brief “ceremony” for the outgoing players during which trophies are presented. This is special for the players and makes a nice photo opp for parents.

### **Summer Ball**

Please promote summer ball to players. Players who play at least 60% of spring games are eligible to try out for a summer team. Usually there are A and B teams in all divisions. There is no summer ball in blastball or TBall. Usually there are summer teams in coach pitch but not always. Details are provided on our website. Questions should be directed to your convenor or the summer ball coordinator.

### **Complaints**

Try to solve problems by discussing with the parties involved. The next step is to involve the convenor who will escalate the situation where warranted. Formal protests and complaint procedures are found in the league’s code of conduct which is posted on the website.

### **Website**

If you have a photo you’d like to post on the site – or a game report you’d like to post, please it to your convenor who will forward to the webmaster. Please keep in mind that some parents have specified that they do not want the league to post photos of their child on our website. This information is included on team rosters. If you choose to identify players in a photo, please use first name and last initial only.

Have a great season!