

East Tonka Little League National League Description

January 22, 2007



The National League continues to focus on player development. During the regular season all players will be given equal playing time, opportunities to develop at different fielding positions and at bats. The National League is made up of all 11 and 12 year olds that are not assigned to an American League team and all players that will be entering 6th grade who have been playing up with their grade. Little League Baseball, Inc., headquartered in Williamsport, PA, publishes a handbook titled "Official Regulations and Playing Rules" which East Tonka Little League abides by. ETLN supplements or reinforces Little League rules with the following local rules: (Games played at South Tonka parks will be governed by South Tonka local rules.)

The National League has a broad cross section of development levels and teams are developed to spread the talent as evenly as possible:

The National League will be made up of players who do not try out for, or are not selected for, the American League. This League is designed to be playing competitive baseball under a development umbrella. Teams will be

selected with an emphasis on making the teams as even as possible. We believe this insures continued player development.

The head coach determines a player's playing time and position on a National League team

Team Selection

Once the AL draft has been completed, all player evaluations are made available to the National League Director for use in team selection, along with prior-year coach evaluations.

On the Monday evening following tryouts and AL player announcement, potential NL head and co-coaches will be notified and asked to confirm their willingness to coach. Once a complete set of head coaches is confirmed a list of available players and parent volunteers (assistant coaches and team parents) will be distributed.

The Thursday following the AL draft, will be the NL team selection night. All head coaches are encouraged to attend and may make a prior request for up to two assistant coaches.

- Each coach will be allowed one assistant to attend the selection meeting. This can be an assistant coach or any other adult they choose. With prior arrangements we will attempt to provide any coach with someone from ETLL who knows the players, if they feel they need help and feel they would be at a disadvantage without it. If the head coach cannot attend the session, a surrogate will be appointed to select the team.
- Assistant coaches will be assigned to teams that do not already have two assistant coaches. Other coaches may be added during the selection process; however teams will be limited to a total of three assistants prior to the selection.
- At the start of the selection meeting, coaches will receive a copy of player evaluations for their use that evening. These evaluations will be collected and destroyed at the end of the meeting.
- Pick order will be determined by the league director. Perhaps by lottery with consideration given to ratings of the players each team is starting with.
- Players with top rankings (5) will be distributed first, spread equitably across teams, then 4's, 3's etc. Player ages will not be a factor in selecting teams

This is not a formal, open draft. Our goal is to select teams in a cooperative manner with an eye toward distribution of pitching and other talent to develop competitive teams which also prioritize team chemistry and playing with friends, where possible.

Coaches will leave the meeting with player registration forms and will contact their respective teams in coordination with the American League Coaches. We will attempt to do this on the next Friday evening following tryouts.

ETLL TEAM SELECTION GUIDELINES

A legacy that has endured at Bennett Park and ETLL is the importance of community and neighborhood and letting kids play with their friends. The ETLL team selection policy prioritizes this legacy, particularly at younger ages. It makes it fun for kids, and their families, and helps create carpooling opportunities to practice fields and games. However, several other priorities challenge this approach and need to be balanced:

Smaller Team size – keeping teams small to minimize the players who have to sit out for more of the game

No “Orphan” Players – If teams are formed from a single school, and a team reaches capacity, the next player gets left out by being placed on a different team.

Spreading the Talent – The ideal ETLL league is one with all teams playing close to .500 ball. No team would go undefeated nor lose all of their games. As leagues become more competitive with increasing age, fairness means finding ways to spread the talent around.

The League Director is primarily responsible for building teams and is the first place to go for questions about the process. Problems may be appealed to the Vice President for Players.

Coach Selection Guidelines

We use the same approach as we use with Coach Pitch, 8A, 9AA and 10AAA leagues. Entering the National League, many former coaching combinations are broken up. This means we will be asking former assistant coaches and other qualified parents to volunteer as a head coach. This can be a very enjoyable year as we form new coaching combinations. The League Director will try to talk to former fellow coaches to confirm a good fit. The final selecting of the head coaches is the decision of the League Director.

Because of the timing and circumstances of National League team selection, recruiting enough head coaches for 10 to 14 teams is a challenge. Beginning in 2006, a system was set up to gather names of head coach volunteers ahead of the AL tryouts/draft, to expedite team formation and drafting. This program will continue in 2007, with an effort to make NL players aware of their status within a day or two of the AL draft, rather than waiting until the completion of the NL team selection process. This will facilitate coach selection and notification as early as possible while also enabling coaches to review available NL players prior to the selection meeting (see Team Selection).

ETLL MISSION AND VALUES:

Mission

Provide a great baseball experience for children at every ability and experience level.

Values

As officials, coaches and parents we strive to:

- Put **safety** above everything
- Keep it **fun** – these are our children and it's just a game
- Develop the baseball **skills** of every child
- Instill **respect** for the game including teammates, opponents, umpires and coaches
- Encourage **involvement** of everyone who wants to play, coach or support the kids

Our Measure of Success:

Kids are enthusiastic to come back and play next year.

EAST TONKA LITTLE LEAGUE CODE OF CONDUCT:

Little League Baseball is constructed to be a safe, fun and competitive experience for youngsters. The program fulfills the promise of these objectives as long as participants at all levels and ages: players, umpires, fans and coaches alike, practice good sportsmanship toward each one another at all times. Positive reinforcement for players, teams, etc. is encouraged and always welcome.

Little League is not a place to express negativism toward anyone. Displays of unsportsmanlike conduct, such as abusive language by **any** participant detract from the quality of the experience of Little League for everyone. Poor sportsmanship is unwanted, unwelcome, unappreciated and will not be tolerated around Little League activities.

Once a game has begun; the umpires rule that game, **RIGHT OR WRONG**. There are published procedures for protesting rules interpretations, but subjective calls may not be questioned. Please limit the expression of any dissatisfaction with the umpiring to a call to the Director of Umpires following the game.

ETLL All Star Coach and Player Selection

All Star Overview and Objectives:

Each year ETLL sends “Post Season All Star Teams” to various tournaments. Two (2) All Star teams each are selected from the 9AA, 10AAA and National Leagues. Two (2) teams are selected from the 11 year olds in the American League and two (2) teams are selected from the 12 year olds in the American League. That is a total of ten (10) ETLL All Star Teams going to various tournaments.

A little known fact is, because of the population in the area where our players live, East Tonka Little League has two (2) charters with Little League Baseball, Incorporated. Our two charters are “East Tonka Little League North” and “East Tonka Little League South”. Prior to the season all teams are randomly assigned to one of these charters. Each league (R, CP, 8A, 9AA, 10AAA, NL, AL) has an equal number of teams assigned to each charter. The two charters have no impact on our regular season, or any in-house year-end tournaments. However; when we select All Star Teams to represent ETLL in post season tournaments, the players and coaches on the teams assigned to each of our two charters make up the potential candidate pool for our two all star teams in each league.

During the post season the head coach determines the batting order and who plays in each game. The tournaments are competitive and not all players will play or bat the same amount. Normally the rules do not allow round robin batting and the substitution policy is closer to real baseball; only the 9 players in the game bat or field. All others sit on the bench. For this reason we limit team size to 11 or 12 players and expect any player that will not be able to attend any games to take their name out of the voting process.

Determining the participants on our All Star teams is not an easy task because there are always many deserving players and not everyone can be selected. Our approach is to have each team send representatives versus having a tryout process to try to identify the absolute top players. In our opinion, tryouts, tracking statistics or some other means of selection is prone to system flaws and is not as effective as having each team send good representatives.

We ask that our All Star players and coaches be good representatives of our East Tonka Little League community and values. In addition to having well-developed baseball skills, we expect All Star players to display good sportsmanship, respect, teamwork, leadership and enthusiasm for the game of baseball. They should be great representatives of their team and our league.

The ETLL Board of Directors and its representatives facilitate the selection process but we leave the final selection to the players and coaches.

Coach and Team Selection by League

Post season tournament opportunities change from time to time but ETLL is committed to finding appropriate All Star opportunities to showcase some of our most developed players. Below is a description of the tournaments and selection process by league.

National League Post Season All Star Play:

East Tonka Little League sponsors an in-house National League post season All Star Tournament. ETLL allows all players that play in the National League during the regular season to be eligible to play in this tournament. Two teams are selected, one from each charter discussed above, and they play a 3 game series at Bennett Family Park after the regular season and in house tournament have been completed. ETLL has also sent these two teams as representatives in local post season tournament after the All Star Games. The availability of tournaments changes from time to time, but this past year we were able to secure spots in two additional tournaments. ETLL does not intend to expand the amount of baseball these teams participate in beyond this historical schedule. These tournaments are fun, competitive, stand-alone events that do not lead to state or national tournaments.

National League All Star Coach Selection:

All 9AA head coaches are candidates to coach one of the two post season teams. The league director asks each coach to submit a secret ballot voting for the two individuals they believe would be the best coach for each team. The two coaches that receive the most votes become head coaches. The head coach can then select their assistant coaches from the other head and assistant coaches in the league/charter.

National League All Star Team Selection:

At least two (2) players are selected from each team in National League. The players on each team submit a secret vote for two (2) players to represent their team. The top vote getter is the "player's pick". The second selection is made by the coaches on the team. The 3 coaches from the team each vote for their top 2 players. The player with the most votes, who is not the players pick, is the other team selection. If needed the All-Star coach then picks the remaining players to fill out the roster from the teams in their league/charter.