

East Tonka Little League 10AAA League Description

January 22, 2007



The 10AAA League is for 10-year olds and players entering the 6th grade in the fall that has been playing up with their grade. Players pitch the full season and a “hardball” is used for the first time. This league continues to develop baseball skills and sportsmanship with teams built to create equal balance throughout the league. Over the course of the season, all players will have an equal opportunity to play and develop their skills. Little League Baseball, Inc., headquartered in Williamsport, PA, publishes a handbook titled “Official Regulations and Playing Rules” which East Tonka Little League abides by. ETLL supplements or reinforces Little League rules with the following local rules:

In this league, scores and standings are kept. Since player development is ALWAYS the priority in ETLL, teams will be formed to encourage player development and balanced competition.

Teams are built based on 4 priorities (in order):

1. Elementary schools attended by the players.
2. Distributing player talent, particularly pitching, for balanced teams

3. Up to 2 friends/neighbors provided on registration form.
4. Disseminating volunteered head coaches

Evaluations

- When available, Player Evaluation Forms required at the end of the previous season are distributed to volunteer head coach candidates.

League Meeting / Development Evaluations

- The League Director and Vice President of Baseball Players, or ETLL President or Player Development Director, will hold a meeting with all coach candidates to sort the development level of all eligible players. The goal is to give the League Director the information needed to effectively build equal teams while accommodating as many teammate requests as possible. The coaches will do their best to sort players in up to 4 primary categories: Fielding, Hitting, Pitching, Base Running / Speed. Unknown players will be assumed at the midpoint. We hope to have enough Coach input so we can agree on the sorting before teams are built. Sorting discussions are confidential and will not be shared or communicated in any manner.

Team Formation

- Sorting meeting with all potential coaches
- The league director selects head coaches.
- The league director will form teams, based on team equity, school groups and friends, while ensuring that cumulative development scores are equivalent.
- Head coaches are allowed one of their assistant coach choices
- Private school players will be given special priority in consideration of playing with friends
- Playing choices with at least one friend will generally be accommodated but not guaranteed, in favor of talent distribution.
- Players new to the league will be sorted at the midpoint.

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

Each season we will go through a process to identify a head coach for each team in the league. Head coaches who have coached effectively at the lower levels and consistently received good year-end-reviews will be included in the coaching pool for the next year. Prior to selecting the new Head Coaches, each League Director will review the coach registration information and interview potential coaches. This will include a review of the expectations of each league. The interview will include a discussion with each head coach candidate about their fit with the league objectives, and their approach to developing players as the level of play becomes more advanced.

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.

10AAA League Post Season All Star Play:

Little League Baseball sponsors a post season tournament for 10 year olds. Any player who plays in the 10AAA League during the regular season is eligible to play in this tournament. ETLL is in Minnesota Little League District 1 and we send two teams, one from each charter as discussed above, to the district tournament. This tournament normally has about 20 teams entered from the other Little League programs in the Minneapolis side of the Twin Cities area. The tournament starts with pool play and eight (8) teams qualify to advance to a double elimination tournament. The winner of this tournament advances to a Little League State Tournament which includes the winners from the four (4) districts in Minnesota. There is no opportunity to advance beyond the state tournament.

10AAA All Star Coach Selection:

All 10AAA head coaches are candidates to coach one of the two post season teams. The league director asks each head 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 their league/charter.

10AAA All Star Team Selection:

At least two (2) players are selected from each team in the 10AAA 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.