



FALL BALL 2009

Dear Little Leaguers and Other Area Youth Baseball & Softball Players,

We hope you are having a great 2009 summer baseball or softball season. As your summer season rolls along, you are probably thinking about fall sports. If you are interested in continuing to play baseball or softball this year, it's time to start thinking about ***FALL BALL at West Madison Little League***. The 2009 fall ball season will start on August 31 and run for six weeks, plus a week for rainout makeup games. Final games will be played no later than October 18th. Each team will generally play a weekday game and a weekend game for a 12-game season, except for the new Challenger Division for Children with Disabilities (see details below). Check out the Fall Ball "Frequently Asked Questions" below for more details.

Fall Ball is WMLL's version of Little League's Training and Development Program (TAD), a slightly less competitive version of summer ball that focuses on providing players the opportunity to improve their skills while playing a variety of positions.

WMLL's Fall Ball registration has been increasing rapidly over the past few years and we anticipate reaching our maximum capacity in 2009. **Leagues will be limited to a specific number of players this year. When we reach that maximum, later registrants will be placed on a waiting list.**

As such, **we encourage everyone to register early starting June 15** (check out the early pay discount for registrations entered by July 3). The final registration deadline will be July 20. However, as noted above, your league may fill sooner than 7/20, so be sure to register as early as possible or you may find yourself on a waiting list. The cost is \$100 per player for WMLL players and \$105 for non-WMLL players from other area leagues (both fees increase by \$15 if you register after July 3). Note: "WMLL Players" are those who live within the following high school attendance areas: Madison West, Madison Memorial and Middleton-Cross Plains. If you live outside these three attendance areas, please register as a "Non-WMLL Player."

NEW!!!! Online Registration beginning June 15 --- many folks have been asking for it and this season, WMLL is introducing a brand new online registration system for Fall Ball. **ALL REGISTRATIONS must come through the online system.** There are multiple payment options (credit cards, debit cards, eChecks). Scholarships may also be requested through the new online system (WMLL reserves the right to confirm scholarship eligibility with your child's school principal) and donations can also be made online. Click on the link on our home page (www.wmll.org) to register starting Monday, June 15.

All parents (except Challenger Division for Children with Disabilities) are expected to volunteer in some capacity or fulfill that obligation through an additional \$50 payment (see "Volunteer Opt Out" section of the online registration system for more details). Volunteer options include head coach, assistant coach (one per team), team rep (parent

rep) or concessions worker (one shift during a home game). Parents will also be asked to volunteer to operate the scoreboard (visiting team) and serve as a base umpire (one from each team). Scoreboard and umpiring DO NOT count towards one of the main volunteer requirements above, but are essential for the program to operate smoothly. These volunteer aspects of Fall Ball allow WMLL to hold the program fees in check and we appreciate everyone's spirit of cooperation.

There will be parent-player-coach meetings August 24th, 25th and 26th at 6:30 PM at the WMLL fields to meet your coaches and team members, and receive your game schedule and uniform. See the schedule below and be sure to attend the correct meeting:

Monday, August 24 --- Minor & Major Baseball Lgs

Tuesday, August 25 --- Minor & Major Softball and Junior & Senior Baseball Lgs

Wednesday, Aug 26 --- Challenger Division for Children with Disabilities

**** Note: Be sure to attend the correct meeting or your coaches won't be there!!! ****

If the weather doesn't cooperate on your meeting night, please call into the WMLL Field Conditions number (608-274-6556) or check the WMLL website for information on a makeup date.

Note to Prospective Coaches: if you are interested in coaching, please indicate so when you register your player on the new online system. Mark your calendar for Saturday, August 22, 10:00 AM, for a Fall Ball coaches meeting at the WMLL fields. This is a very important meeting where we will review rules, handout equipment, uniforms, rosters and game schedules. All coaches need to attend.

NEW!!! Challenger Division for Children with Disabilities --- WMLL is adding a Challenger Division of play to our Fall Ball program in 2009. Any disabled child between the ages of 8 and 16 living in Dane County is eligible to play. The Challenger season will begin Saturday, Sept 5 and run for five weeks with Saturday games. Games are planned for the WMLL Major Field (closest to Forward Drive). Use the new online registration to sign up. Special fees are set up for Challenger players (\$25 if register by July 3 and \$35 after that date) and volunteer requirements are waived so parents can attend to their child's needs, as appropriate. Check the WMLL website for a Challenger Program brochure with more details.

So...if you won't be quite ready to oil up that glove and put it away for the winter come September, then visit the WMLL website at www.wmll.org and look for the new link to the Fall Ball 2009 online registration system on 6/15. Remember, get in early to assure yourself a spot on a fall ball team this year. If you have any questions, please contact Bill at 239-6161 or by email at eartags@aol.com or Randy at 279-0384 or randaln@charter.net.

Play Ball,

Bill Battista

Bill Battista
WMLL Exec. Director

Randy Norton

Randy Norton
WMLL Fall Ball Coordinator



WMLL Fall Ball --- Frequently Asked Questions

What is Fall Ball?

Fall ball is the West Madison Little League's version of Little League International's Training and Development Program (TAD). Teams are organized at four baseball age levels and two girls' softball age levels and play two games a week for six weeks, with an extra week for rainout makeup games. It provides an opportunity for additional baseball/softball after the summer season, is somewhat less competitive than the summer season, provides an opportunity for players at certain ages to test their skill at the next level of play, and allows players the opportunity to try new positions. There will also be a new Challenger Division of play in 2009 for children with disabilities. The Challenger season begins Sept 5 and ends Oct 3, with all games being played on Saturdays.

What League will I play in?

The four **baseball age** levels, **based on your age as of 4/30/09** are:

Minor Baseball (7, 8, 9 year olds) ... this is a pitching machine league

Major Baseball (10, 11, 12) ... played on standard Little Lg field with 60 ft bases

Junior Baseball (12, 13, 14) ... played on full-sized diamond with 90 ft bases

Senior Baseball (14, 15, 16) ... played on full-sized diamond with 90 ft bases

If your age is 12 or 14, you will have the choice of playing in the younger or older aged league. That is a personal choice based on whether you feel you would benefit from additional play in the league in which you just completed summer play (with those age specific rules) or if you would like to test your skills at the next level of summer play (with those rules). For players 12 years old, the older age level will play on a full-sized baseball diamond instead of the little league sized diamond, as noted above.

The two **girls' softball age** levels, **based on your age as of 12/31/08** are:

Minor Softball (7, 8, 9, 10, 11) ... played on standard Little Lg field with 60 ft bases

Major Softball (11, 12, 13, 14, 15) ... played on standard Little Lg field with 60 ft bases

If your age is 11, you will have the choice of playing in the younger or older aged league. That is a personal choice based on whether you feel you would benefit from additional play in the league in which you just completed summer play (with those age specific rules) or if you would like to test your skills at the next level of summer play (with those rules).

Challenger Division includes all ages 8 through 16. If enough players register, we will attempt to create teams in two skill level leagues.

Who can play fall ball?

Fall ball is primarily organized to support the needs of the WMLL baseball community. However, fall ball is also open to any other players in the greater Madison and southern Wisconsin area whose baseball/softball league program does not have a fall season. Those players not living within the WMLL regular season boundary area (high school attendance area for Madison West, Madison Memorial and Middleton-Cross Plains) may still register, but will be placed on teams based on space availability. In the past, everyone who registered by the July 20 deadline was placed on a team, but this cannot be guaranteed in 2009. **PLEASE NOTE: in 2009, we do anticipate reaching our maximum player capacity for each age league, so please register early.** Each league will have a separate maximum capacity and once that capacity is reached, all later registrants will be placed on a waiting list.

**Register online early at www.wml.org deadline is July 20,
but individual leagues may fill to capacity sooner than 7/20.
And save money by registering by July 3rd!!!!**

What are the Fees for Fall Ball?

Fall Ball fees for standard baseball and softball are \$100 for WMLL players (players who live in the West, Memorial or Middleton-Cross Plains high school districts) and \$105 for non-WMLL players. Fees for the Challenger Division are \$25 for all players. **These fees apply to all registrations entered into our online registration system by July 3, 2009. After 7/3, please add \$15 to either standard fee (add \$10 to Challenger fee).** Final registration deadline is July 20, 2009. Fees cover league administration, grounds keeping, home plate umpire, uniforms (t-shirt, hat & socks), equipment and baseballs/softballs.

When and where will I play?

All games will be at the WMLL complex at 701 Forward Drive in Madison. All teams will generally be scheduled for **one week night and one weekend day game each week, except Challenger Division.** The season will start on August 31; will continue for six weeks of league play, followed by an extra week for rainout makeup games. Minor league baseball and both softball leagues will play on the minor league diamond. Major league baseball (and some Major softball) and Challenger Division, will play on the major league diamond, and Junior and Senior league baseball on the Senior diamond. Below is a list of when games in each league will generally play. This schedule is subject to change depending on registration numbers for each league.

Minor baseball will be played Tue, Wed, Thu or Fri, and Sun.

Major baseball will be played Tue, Wed, Thu or Fri, and Sun.

Junior baseball will be played Tue, Thu or Fri, and Sun.

Senior baseball will be played Mon or Wed, and Sat.

Minor softball will be played Mon and Sat.

Major softball will be played Mon and Sat.

Challenger Division will be played on Saturdays (Sept 5 through Oct 3).

All play will end as of October 18, 2009, even if all rained out games have not been made up, so that WMLL's pre-winter maintenance can be conducted on the fields.

What is the Fall Ball "Buddy" System?

The Buddy system allows two players to put each other's name on their registration form as their "buddy" with whom they would like to play on the same team. Players may only select ONE buddy and names must match on both forms. WMLL will attempt to pair buddies on the same team, if possible, but cannot guarantee this placement.

What is the "Parent Volunteer" Requirement?

Every parent (except in Challenger Division) is required to volunteer in one of four ways to fulfill this requirement. The options are Head Coach, Assistant Coach (1 per team), Team Representative or Concessions Worker (one shift in concession stand during a home game for your team). Parents may "opt out" by paying an additional \$50 fee. In addition to the volunteer requirement above, parents will be asked to volunteer to serve as base umpires (any game) and scoreboard operators (when your team is the visiting team). These last two items DO NOT satisfy the main parent volunteer requirement above.

League Coordinators

Each league will have a coordinator who will select the coaches, form the teams, distribute uniforms and equipment, maintain standings, etc. (Note: please be sure to indicate when registering your player if you are interested in head-coaching a team)

Other Questions?

Contact Bill Battista, WMLL Exec. Director, at 239-6161 or eartags@aol.com

OR

Randy Norton, WMLL Board Member & Fall Ball Coordinator, at 279-0384 or randaln@charter.net