

2018 FALL BALL PARENT MEETING

Welcome to West Madison Little League!

WMLL Parent & Volunteer Pledge: *"I will teach all children to play fair and to do their best. I will positively support all managers, coaches and players. I will respect the decisions of the umpires. I will praise a good effort, win or lose."*

WMLL

- **A Special Place!** For decades WMLL has provided structured baseball & softball programs in a supportive, family-friendly environment. In so doing, WMLL strives to have our players develop their physical skills, knowledge & appreciation of the game, as well as, positive lifetime attributes including sportsmanship, leadership, discipline & teamwork.
 - In 2018 West Madison Little League is celebrating our 60th anniversary – including 54 seasons at the Forward Drive complex & 18 seasons of girls' softball!
- **WMLL today:** 1,100+ players & 100+ teams in 2018 (500+ players & 42 teams in Fall Ball)
 - **2 Seasons of Play:** Every year WMLL conducts a spring/summer Little League season (late April thru mid-July) & a Fall Ball season (late August thru mid-October)
 - Near the end of the spring/summer season, WMLL also forms a number of baseball & softball "all-star" tournament teams that represent WMLL in a number of area tournaments. There were 17 such teams in 2018.
 - **3 Types of Ball** – WMLL offers baseball for boys & girls, softball for girls, & Fall Challenger League baseball for boys & girls with disabilities
 - **18 Age-Based Leagues** – 5 spring/summer & 5 fall baseball leagues, 4 spring/summer & 3 fall softball leagues, & 1 fall Challenger League
 - **Little League Age?** WMLL adheres to the "Age Determination Date" rules established by Little League, Inc.
 - **For baseball**, a player's age as of August 31, 2019 is their Little League age for the 2019 season.
 - **For softball**, a player's age as of December 31, 2018 is that player's Little League age for the 2019 season.
- **Location:** WMLL's main complex, which include three playing fields, is located at 701 Forward Drive. At times, WMLL also plays some softball games on the Jefferson Middle School softball diamonds located at 101 S. Gammon Road.
 - At Forward Drive, the field closest to the road is the Major Field & the field furthest from the road (without lights) is the Minor Field. Both these fields have 60' bases & a 46' mound. The large field is the Senior Field. It has 90' bases & 60' 6" mound. Softball pitching distances are Minor Lg = 35', Major Lg = 40' & Junior Lg = 43'.
- **Parking:** To ensure adequate parking for those with special needs & coaches carrying heavy equipment bags, the use of WMLL's parking lot is restricted to vehicles displaying either an official handicap permit or a valid WMLL parking pass. WMLL families may park anywhere on Forward Drive & in the portion of the Madison Ice Arena parking lot close to Forward Drive.
 - **Special Saturday restrictions:** On Saturday morning ONLY Challenger League families can park in the main lot.
 - **Player Drop-Off:** Please use the designated drop off zone on Forward Drive just to the north of the main parking lot entrance. Do not pull into WMLL's parking lot for drop-offs or pick-ups as there are many people in the area.
- **Mandatory Service Requirement:** To make the WMLL experience a great one for our players, while also keeping our registration fees affordable, WMLL requires one parent / guardian for each player registered to volunteer in some fashion every season...or to opt out by making a special donation when registering.
- **wml.org:** WMLL's website is a great source of information – schedules, field conditions, league standings, rules, contact information, event listings, key information, volunteer opportunities, etc.

FALL BALL

- **Philosophy:** Fall Ball is WMLL's version of Little League's Training and Development Program, a slightly less competitive version of the spring /summer season that focuses on providing players an opportunity to improve their skills playing a variety of positions. The emphasis is development!

- Due to the developmental focus, players are assigned into Fall Ball leagues based upon what their Little League age will be for the next spring/summer season.
- **Team Rosters:** Fall Ball teams are formed by the league coordinator using player evaluations & other information to distribute more skilled and less skilled players evenly across teams...while also trying to accommodate buddy requests & special travel needs for players coming from longer distances.
- **Uniforms & Equipment:**
 - **Jersey & Cap/Visor:** This Fall, WMLL will provide Rookie, Minor & Major league BB & SB & Challenger Lg teams with Dri-Fit style jerseys that players get to keep. A cap/visor will also be provided.
 - **Additional Personal Gear:** Players need to provide their own pants, socks (most players will get them to match the main team color) & mitt. Male players should also wear an athletic supporter. Cleats & batting gloves are not required, but many players use them (cleats must be plastic except for the Junior & Senior Leagues).
 - **Bats:** While the league doesn't supply bats for baseball, it may be possible to borrow one from another player. **All baseball bats used in Little League baseball, excluding the Senior League, must bear the USA Baseball logo.**
 - **Helmets & Balls:** The league provides helmets, but some players like to get their own (in Rookie & Minor Lg BB & Minor & Major Lg SB face masks are required on helmets). The league also provides game balls & coaches have practice balls for team use.
- **Fall Ball Season:** The season consists of 12-games over seven weeks beginning on Aug 27. Teams play twice a week – usually one weekday & one weekend game. The season will end on Oct 14 even if all rainout makeups have not been completed.
 - No games are scheduled on Labor Day (Sep 3) or Rosh Hashanah (Sep 10). Week 7 is reserved for any rainout makeups that weren't rescheduled during weeks 1-6. Labor Day may also be used for rainout makeups.
- **Coaches:** All WMLL coaches are volunteers. Before each season, the Board of Directors seeks out & selects head coaches based on experience and other qualifications. Once chosen, each head coach selects one official assistant coach (subject to Board approval). The children of the head & assistant coach are automatically on their team.
 - **Team Reps:** Each head coach also recruits a volunteer team rep. The team rep assumes a variety of tasks designed to ensure good communication within the team and the smooth running of off-field team business. This individual works closely with the head coach and together they determine the team rep's exact duties.
- **Team Practices:** Practice plans are up to each team's coaches.
 - **Pregame Warmups:** Coaches also decide if their team will warm up prior to games. This must be done in designated areas adhering to WMLL rules. Teams can use a batting cage before games (home team: 70 - 40 mins before the game & visiting team: 40 - 10 mins). Major, Junior & Senior BB & SB teams have priority. If cages are occupied, Rookie & Minor BB & SB teams can use the soft-toss stations. Time permitting, the home team may conduct infield practice for up to 8 minutes but cannot interfere with the game's official start time.
- **Schedule:** The best source for the schedule is wml.org. It can be viewed by team, league, day or as a complete calendar-style master schedule containing all leagues & games. The master schedule is also posted on the Forward Drive bulletin board (but may lag behind the website with updates)
- **Rules:** All national Little League rules, as described in the current season rulebook, apply unless specifically changed in WMLL's local rules. The WMLL Safety Plan contains further regulations which will be enforced as local rules.
 - **Local Rules:** Local rules for each league are available on WMLL's website.
 - **Inning & Time limits:** All Fall Ball games are limited to 6-innings with two types of time limits. There also is a 9 PM curfew Sunday thru Thursday that supersedes both time limits.
 - No new inning may begin after the "**No New Inning**" time limit is reached - 1 hr, 20 min for Rookie BB, Minor BB & Minor SB & 1 hr, 40 min for other leagues
 - When the "**Hard**" time limit is reached (10 mins after the "No New Inning" time limit), the game ends immediately after the current batter finishes their at-bat.
 - During weeks 1-3, the first weekday game on the Minor Field (except for Major SB) must end by 5:50 PM.
 - Time-limited games can end in a tie & are a complete game regardless of the number of innings played.

- **Field Conditions:** There are several ways to keep abreast of field conditions on game days.
 - Check the field condition page on WMLL’s website at www.wmll.org/about-wmll/field-conditions/
 - Sign up for field condition email alerts at www.wmll.org/about-wmll/field-conditions/subscribe/
 - Call WMLL's field condition hotline at 274-6556
 - Follow WMLL on Twitter or Facebook
 - Look for field condition updates on the sign by WMLL’s parking lot
- **Weather Delays & Cancellations:**
 - **Lightning:** When lightning is visible, the game will be suspended for 30 mins and everyone must take immediate shelter in the dugouts, near the concession stand or in private vehicles (NOT under trees!)
 - **Calling Games:** When a game has been delayed for 45 min, it will be called.
 - **Immediate Cancellations:** These rules will not restrict play from being immediately cancelled for safety reasons.
- **Post-Game Treats:** The registration fee included a \$2 post-game snack after every game for all players in all leagues.
- **Game Day Volunteer Requirements:** (Team Reps coordinate this...please be cooperative & helpful!)
 - **Home team:** one parent concession stand helper & one base umpire (home plate umpire is provided by WMLL)
 - **Visiting team:** one scoreboard operator (get/return controller from concession stand) & one base umpire
 - Check with your team’s coaches & team rep for other ways to help on game day, at practices, etc.
 - During Fall Ball, coaching, serving as team rep & working a concession shift satisfy the service requirement (base umping and working the scoreboard do not.)

Working in the Concession Stand

- Concession stand volunteers are CRITICAL to the successful operation of the concession stand, while also keeping our registration fees affordable.
- Volunteer must be at least 16 years old (adults are preferred)
- The volunteer work shift begins 15 mins before the game time and last thru the "end of game" rush.

SAFETY & BEHAVIOR

- **Sportsmanship:** Coaches, parents, players, and spectators must adhere to a high level of sportsmanship. WMLL will not tolerate:
 - verbal or physical altercations or other negative interactions between or among coaches, spectators & players
 - harassment of umpires, including questioning “judgment” calls, not accepting & respecting umpire decisions & other actions that undermine umpire authority
 - hazing or organized chanting or “cheering” directed at opposing teams or players
 Instances of unsportsmanlike behavior reported to the Board of Directors will be investigated by the President and may result in discipline, including suspensions.
- **Safety First:** WMLL believes in “safety first” & is an active participant in Little League’s “A Safety Awareness Program”. Players, coaches, spectators and umpires are expected to:
 - be careful, use good judgment and adhere to the guidelines in the WMLL safety plan
 - help keep WMLL’s fields, grounds and facilities neat, clean and safe
 - report any hazardous condition or safety issue with the facility, grounds, playing fields and equipment a WMLL board member, a grounds crew member or the full-time staff in the concession stand.
- **Dugout Rules:** Only uniformed players, team coaches & one additional helper are permitted in the dugout. Players must stay in the playing area or on the bench during the game unless a coach permits them to leave. These rules are intended to keep players safe & help them stay focused on the game. Please respect them!
- **Peanut Ban:** For the safety of players & spectators with peanut allergies WMLL does not allow peanuts anywhere at the ballpark.

- **No Pets Allowed:** For insurance, safety and sanitary reasons, pets are not allowed at WMLL – except for guide dogs for sight-impaired individuals.
- **No Smoking or Alcoholic Beverages:** Smoking & alcoholic beverages are not allowed on WMLL property.

GOVERNANCE & VOLUNTEERING

- **WMLL Governance**
 - **WMLL is a membership organization:** All parents of registered players and recognized volunteers are defined as members. The annual membership meeting, held in October, is the highest decision-making authority.
 - **Board of Directors:** WMLL has a 15-member Board of Directors. Board terms are three years and five Board members are elected at each annual meeting. The Board meets monthly & all members are welcome to attend. Board member & meeting Information is available on WMLL's website.
 - **Executive Director:** Day to day administration of the league is the responsibility of a part-time Executive Director who reports to the Board of Directors.
- **WMLL needs you & there are many ways to get involved!** (see WMLL's website for more information)
 - **Volunteer:** WMLL is a people-dependent organization. It takes a lot of work both at & away from the field to make WMLL the special place that it is & to provide our players with everything they need to grow & have fun. WMLL has a wide variety of single-day, single-season, annual & flexible duration volunteer opportunities!
 - **Attend a board meeting, especially WMLL's Annual Meeting:** Board meetings are typically held on the second Sunday of each month at Vitense Golf and are open to the parents of WMLL players & to WMLL volunteers.
 - **Make a donation:** Many options exist for giving to WMLL, including our Commemorative Brick Campaign, Player Scholarship Fund, General Donations & Capital Campaign.
 - **Become a sponsor:** WMLL offers many types & levels of sponsorship opportunities, including sponsoring a team, our roster program, a field sign, a website link, our field condition email update or our player scholarship fund.

KEY CONTACTS - Please contact WMLL if you have questions, suggestions, concerns, or comments.

- **Your Team's Coach and/or Team Rep**
- **Fall Ball League Coordinators:**
 - **Rookie BB:** Kyle Friedow – 212-2337 / kylewml@gmail.com
 - **Minor BB:** Harry Miller – 233-0866 / mill7049@gmail.com
 - **Major BB:** Frank Lenocho – 233-1483 / kflenoch@gmail.com
 - **Junior BB:** Tom Rhatican – 338-2803 / trhat79@gmail.com
 - **Senior BB:** Jerry Schmitt – 575-3988 / dksgrs@tds.net
 - **Challenger Lg:** Randy Norton – 279-0384 / randaln@charter.net
 - **Minor SB:** Brian Beutter (see above) & Scott Fossum – 209-2485 / scottfossum@gmail.com
 - **Major & Junior SB:** Barry Vredenburg – 575-6204 / bvredenburg@madison.com
- **Fall Ball Season Coordinators:** Tom Rhatican – 338-2803 / trhat79@gmail.com & Brian Beutter – 535-0001 / brian.beutter@gmail.com
- **Executive Director:** Brian Beutter – 535-0001 / brian.beutter@gmail.com
- **President:** Tom Heneghan – 698-1995 / Tom.Heneghan@huschblackwell.com