

2019 FALL BALL PARENT MEETING

Welcome to West Madison Little League!

WMLL OVERVIEW

- **WEST MADISON LITTLE LEAGUE:** Founded in 1959, WMLL provides quality baseball & softball programs for 7-16 year-old boys and girls in a positive environment with a family-friendly ballpark and first-class playing fields. Our mission is to ensure that all players, regardless of their skill level, have fun, improve their skills, and learn important life lessons that extend far beyond the playing field, like sportsmanship, teamwork, leadership and doing one's best. As part of this mission, WMLL proudly includes a Challenger Baseball League for players with physical and mental disabilities, and scholarship support for players whose families need financial assistance among our core programs.
- **PROGRAMS:** ~1,000+ players & ~100 teams in 2019 (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 16 such teams in 2019.
 - **3 Types of Ball:** WMLL offers baseball for boys & girls, softball for girls, & Fall Challenger League baseball for boys & girls with disabilities
 - **5 Age Divisions:** WMLL offers five age-based leagues in both baseball & softball – a Rookie Lg for LL ages 7 & 8, a Minor Lg for LL ages 9 & 10, a Major Lg for LL ages 11 & 12, a Junior Lg for LL ages 13 & 14* and a Senior Lg for LL ages 14 & 15. The Fall Challenger League is for players of all ages.
 - **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, 2020 is their Little League age for the 2020 season.
 - **For softball**, a player's age as of December 31, 2019 is that player's Little League age for the 2020 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.
- **PLAYING FIELDS (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 Dr. & in the Madison Ice Arena parking lot close to Forward Dr.
 - **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 Dr. 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.
- **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 WMLL safety plan guidelines at all times.
 - Report any hygiene issues, hazards or safety concerns to a WMLL board member or to ground crew or concession stand staff.
 - Keep an eye on your children, help them understand & follow WMLL rules & remind them to be careful on playground equipment.
- **BALLPARK PROHIBITIONS:** The following activities & items are PROHIBITED on WMLL property: pets (excluding service animals); alcohol, drugs & smoking (including vaping & e-cigarettes); weapons of any kind; peanuts & tree nuts; littering; using bikes, skateboards, scooters or rollerblades; and climbing on fences, trees, picnic tables or bleachers.
- **VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS:** (Team Reps coordinate this...please be cooperative & helpful!)
 - **Mandatory Service:** 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 as a coach, team rep or concession stand helper...or to opt out by making a special donation when registering.
 - **Coaches (2-3 volunteers for the full season):** All WMLL coaches are volunteers selected based on experience

and other qualifications. The children of the head & assistant coach are automatically on their team.

- **Team Rep (one volunteer for the full season):** Team reps assume a variety of tasks designed to ensure good communication within the team and the smooth running of off-field team business. The team rep works closely with the head coach and together they determine the team rep's exact duties. A primary task is organizing team volunteers for all games. *There is a team rep meeting for team reps new to Fall Ball on Wed, Aug 21 at 6:30 PM.*
- **Concession Stand Helper (one volunteer provided by the home team every game):** Concession stand helpers are CRITICAL to the successful operation of the concession stand. Volunteers must be at least 16 years-old (adults are preferred). Shifts begin 15 mins before game time and last thru the "end of game" rush.
- **Other Volunteer Needs** (do NOT satisfy mandatory service requirement):
 - **Scoreboard Operator (one volunteer provided by the visiting team every game):** *Get/return the scoreboard controller from/to the concession stand & keep score during the game (inning, strikes, balls, outs, runs).*
 - **Base Umpire (1-2 volunteers needed for every game from home and/or visiting team):** Assist the league provided home plate umpire.
 - Other: Check with your team's coaches & team rep for other ways to help on game day, at practices, etc.
- **Volunteer Applications & Background Checks:** WMLL requires Board members, head coaches, team reps, paid staff (concessions workers, grounds crew & executive director) & adult umpires to submit a volunteer application and undergo a background check once every calendar year.
- **BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS:** Coaches, parents, players, and spectators must adhere to a high level of sportsmanship.
 - Be respectful, considerate, supportive & positive. Others are watching...including your child!
 - Encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating it at all times.
 - Remember that the players are kids, this is a game, the coaches volunteer & the umpires are human (& usually kids)...RELAX & ENJOY THE GAME!
 - **Prohibited Behavior:** WMLL does not tolerate offensive language or gestures; noisemakers (radios, cow bells, clap sticks, air horns, etc.); heckling, taunting & intentionally distracting teams, coaches or players (including booing); harassing & disrespecting umpires (including questioning calls, not accepting decisions & undermining their authority); confronting coaches or managers during games; entering the dugout or playing field (unless you are a coach, umpire or player); and verbal or physical altercations or other negative interactions with coaches, spectators, umpires & players
 - Instances of unsportsmanlike behavior reported to the Board of Directors will be investigated by the President and may result in discipline, including suspensions.
- **WMLL.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 & 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! **NEW in 2019!** *While scores will be kept during games, neither scores nor standings will appear on WMLL's website.*
 - 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.
- **TEAMS:** 42 teams in 2019 - BASEBALL: 4 Challenger Lg, 4 Rookie Lg, 8 Minor Lg, 7 Major Lg, 4 Junior Lg & 4 Senior Lg
SOFTBALL: 2 Rookie Lg SB, 4 Minor Lg SB, 4 Major Lg SB & 1 Junior Lg SB. **New in 2019!** *All teams have been assigned a team name. Teams can change this name (to a name not currently in use) thru Sun, Sep 8.*
- **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. If your team's coach has not contacted you with team information yet, they should be very soon.
- **SEASON:** The season consists of 12-games played over six weeks beginning on Mon, Aug 26. Week 7 is reserved for any rainout makeups that weren't rescheduled during weeks 1-6. Teams play twice a week – usually one weekday & one

weekend game. The season will end on Sun, Oct 13 even if all rainout makeups have not been completed.

- No games are scheduled on Labor Day (Sep 3) or Rosh Hashanah (Sep 10). Labor Day may also be used for rainout makeups.
- **SCHEDULE:** The best source for the schedule is wml.org (or your team's team management app if one is used). At wml.org, schedules can be viewed by team, league, day or as a calendar-style master schedule with all leagues/games.
 - The master schedule will also be posted on the ballpark info board (but updates may lag behind the website)
- **TEAM ROSTERS:** Fall Ball teams were 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.
- **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.
- **UNIFORMS:** Uniforms for all Fall Ball leagues consist of Dri-Fit style jerseys & caps/visors. Players get to keep both. Players need to provide their own pants & socks. 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 Lgs).
- **EQUIPMENT:** Equipment lists are available on WMLL's website under the resource tab.
 - **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 Rookie, Minor & Major Lg Baseball, must bear the USA Baseball logo. In Senior Lg BB, bats must comply with BBCOR standards. In Junior Lg BB, bats can comply with either of these standards.**
 - **Helmets:** WMLL provides helmets, but some players like to get their own (in the Rookie & Minor Lgs & Major Lg SB face masks are required on helmets).
 - **Balls:** WMLL also provides game balls & coaches have practice balls for team use. In softball, the Rookie Lg uses an 11" softie ball, the Minor Lg uses an 11" hard ball & all other SB leagues use a 12" hard ball.
 - **First-Aid Kits:** All teams are given a basic first aid kit that is required at all games & practices. A large first-aid kit & an AED are available at the concession stand.
- **POST-GAME TREATS:** The registration fee included a \$2 post-game snack after every game for all players in all leagues.
- **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 the Rookie, Minor & Minor Leagues & 1 hr, 40 min for the Major, Junior & Senior 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.
 - Time-limited games can end in a tie & are a complete game regardless of the number of innings played.
 - During weeks 1-3, the first weekday game on the Minor Field must end by 5:50 PM.
 - **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!
- **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.wml.org/about-wml/field-conditions/
 - Sign up for field condition email alerts at www.wml.org/about-wml/field-conditions/subscribe/
 - Call WMLL's field condition hotline at 274-6556
- **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.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP WMLL, YOUR TEAM & YOUR CHILD!

- **Stay informed** – Make use of the information available at WMLL's website (wml.org), on the ballpark bulletin board & in WMLL email communications.
- **Support your team** – Read team communications, help your coach & team rep when asked, RSVP with your child's availability for practices & games, get to know team players & families, & be a positive supporter at games.
- **Be a knowledgeable spectator** - Understand game, weather & time limit rules. All are available on WMLL's website.
- **Use good behavior**
- **Help keep the ballpark clean & safe**
- **Do not park in the WMLL lot without a handicap permit or valid WMLL pass**
- **Complete your mandatory volunteer service**
- **Recommend WMLL to your friends, neighbors & coworkers** – Help spread the word about WMLL & recruit new players. Word of mouth recommendations from existing WMLL families are incredibly effective & easy to do.
- **Support WMLL & our sponsors** – Purchase food & drinks at the concession stand, participate in WMLL fundraisers, buy a commemorative brick that will be mounted in the Picnic Porch & do business with, & thank, WMLL sponsors.
- **Make a donation or become a sponsor** – Make a donation to WMLL's general fund or scholarship fund or become a WMLL sponsor – many options exist & all are tax-deductible.
- **Attend a WMLL Board meeting** - Meetings are open to all player-parents & volunteers & typically take place from 6:30-8:30 PM on the second Sunday of each month.
- **Attend the WMLL Annual Meeting** - The Annual Meeting for player-parents & volunteers is on Saturday, October 26 at 9 AM & includes a year-in-review update, an open- forum for thoughts, suggestions & ideas & elections for open Board positions
- **Volunteer** – Volunteer in an area of personal interest or skill to help keep WMLL the special place that it is & ensure that WMLL players have everything they need to grow & have fun. There are countless ways to get involved – both at & away from the field!

KEY CONTACTS

- **Your Team's Coach and/or Team Rep**
- **Fall Ball League Coordinators:**
 - **Rookie League BB:** Robb Vogel – 444-5040 / rvogel0615@yahoo.com
 - **Minor League BB:** Kraig Bodie – 218/780-8746 / kraig.bodie@hotmail.com
 - **Major League BB:** Frank Lenocho – 233-1483 / kflenoch@gmail.com
 - **Junior League BB:** Mark Newburg – 831-0334 / newy@tds.net
 - **Senior League BB:** Jerry Schmitt – 575-3988 / dksgrs@tds.net
 - **Rookie League SB:** Scott Fossum – 209-2485 / scottfossum@gmail.com
 - **Minor League SB:** Michele Gassman – 345-1508 / scubadive07@gmail.com
 - **Major League SB:** Barry Vredenburg – 575-6204 / bvredenburg@madison.com
 - **Junior League SB:** Scott Fossum – 209-2485 / scottfossum@gmail.com
- **Executive Director:** Brian Beutter – 535-0001 / brian.beutter@gmail.com
- **President:** Tom Heneghan – 698-1995 / umpires@wml.org

PLEASE CONTACT WMLL IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, SUGGESTIONS, CONCERNS, OR COMMENTS!