December 2009

Dear District Administrator:

Plans are being finalized for the 25th International Congress March 12-15, 2010, in Lexington, Kentucky. On the next few pages you will find the Congress Agenda as determined by the Rules Committee, based on questionnaires and surveys completed in the latter months of 2009 and various recommendations from volunteers all over the world.

Please bear in mind that you represent the leagues of your district in the largest democratic baseball and softball forum in the world. We urge you to present these important issues to the leagues in your district and determine their views on how you (or your designated Alternate) should vote. Please impress upon your leagues the importance of their input into shaping the Little League program around the world.

These items will be presented for round-table discussions at the Congress for any possible changes. Voting is then conducted among all Delegates in attendance. Only those items receiving at least two-thirds of the vote will be presented to the International Board of Directors for ratification. Tournament Rules changes receiving two-thirds of the delegates' votes will be forwarded to the International Tournament Committee for consideration.

Delegates are eligible to vote on every topic directly affecting the programs chartered in the delegate's district. Electronic ballots, distributed at the Congress, will be preprogrammed specifically for each Delegate/District.

Please don't hesitate to contact Little League International with any questions you may have. We look forward to meeting with you and/or your district staff in Lexington as together we help shape the future course of Little League Baseball and Softball.

Lastly, please make your hotel and airline/transportation arrangements by January 15, 2010.

Sincerely,

Stephen D. Keener
President and Chief Executive Officer

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LITTLE LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS
A G E N D A

ITEM 1 - AFFECTS REGULATION I – THE LEAGUE - SENIOR LEAGUE SOFTBALL

(a) Junior League is an extension of the local Little League to accommodate youngsters league ages 13 and 14 with an exception for 12-year-old players as noted in Regulation IV (a); Senior League is an extension of the local Little League to accommodate youngsters league ages 13-16; Big League is an extension of the local Little League to accommodate youngsters league ages 14-18.

NOTE: Junior/Senior/Big League players may participate in other softball programs during the regular season and tournament subject to the provisions of Regulation IV.

Senior/Big League:
Teams from one or more leagues in a district which are currently chartered may join to form a Senior/Big League. Any district which can field four (4) teams, must have its own league. Where one district cannot field four (4) teams, leagues in adjoining districts may combine to form a Senior/Big League not to exceed ten (10) teams, with approval of the Charter Committee.

EXCEPTION: The Senior/Big League may be a district-operated program, supervised by the District Administrator. Such a district-wide program may draw participants from within the boundaries of each chartered league in the district. However, each Local League wishing to do so may retain its own team/league structure. NOTE: District Administrators, even if they operate a district-wide Senior/Big League program, are not permitted to vote in the election for District Administrator.

Synopsis: This regulation would allow Senior Softball Divisions to be chartered at the District level, as is currently offered in the Big League Division.

ITEM 2 – AFFECTS REGULATION II – LEAGUE BOUNDARIES – NEW REGULATION – II (I)

The Board of Directors of the local Little League may enroll a player whose residence is outside the league's boundaries, but only under all three of the following conditions: (1) the player has residence within another chartered Little League's boundaries, and (2) the league where the player resides releases and waives all current and future rights to the player for regular season andtournament, and (3) the District Administrator approves the request.
NOTE: A player who qualifies for and exercises this waiver, then elects not to participate for a playing season, is not eligible to be retained in future seasons.

REGULATIONS II (I) – PROCESSING PROCEDURE – ALL LEVELS OF PLAY

The league president will process a II (i) form. Once the president completes the form, he/she must receive written notification from the league where the player currently resides as outlined above. The league president will present this form and written notification to the District Administrator for review and approval. Once the District Administrator verifies the documentation meets the regulations, the District Administrator may sign the II (i) form granting his or her approval. The league and the district will maintain the form and documenting in their files. This verification process is only required once during a participant's career. The league must maintain this form and documentation for this player for the duration of his/her career until the player graduates from the program or breaks service with the league. Tournament teams with players qualifying under this regulation will be required to carry a copy of this form and documentation with them throughout the tournament. If contested during tournament play, the league will be required to produce the documentation. Additionally, if it is determined at a later date that the player does not meet the conditions of II (i), the player is ineligible for further participation. Situations in which documentation is not available must be referred to the Charter Committee through the regional office for decision. The decision of the Charter Committee is final and binding.

Synopsis: This regulation would allow leagues to register players who live in another chartered Little League's boundaries, with written consent from both league presidents and the District Administrator.

ITEM 3 – AFFECTS REGULATION IV – THE PLAYERS – TEE BALL BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL

Tee Ball Division: Any candidate who will attain the age of 4 years before May 1 (Softball: January 1) and who will not attain the age of 8 before May 1 (Softball: January 1) of the year in question shall be eligible to compete in the Tee Ball Division Baseball (subject to the Local League Board of Directors alignment of this division). This means that a child who will be 8 years old on May 1 (Softball: January 1) or later, is eligible to play that year; a child who will be 8 years old on April 30 (Softball: December 31) or earlier will not be eligible for either Local League play or tournament play at any time during the calendar year in question.

Synopsis: This would allow leagues the ability to expand their Tee Ball division to accept 4-year olds.

ITEM 4 – AFFECTS REGULATION V – SELECTION OF PLAYERS – ALL LEVELS OF PLAY
Operating Manual Plan B

The draft is conducted in two separate phases. The first part includes those players who: (a) are returning from a Major team in the same division, AND; (b) have registered for the current season.

This first phase of drafting returning players must be completed before the second phase of the draft, and all returning players who qualify under both conditions above must be drafted. Managers are not permitted to waive a draft choice.

The second phase of the draft includes all players who are eligible for selection and have attended the required number of tryout sessions.

The draft rotation follows the reverse order to finish from the previous season, with the last place team's manager receiving the first pick, then the second-to-last place team, and so on. For instance, in a four-team league, the manager of the last place team from the previous season makes the following player selections: 1st choice, 8th, 9th, 16th, 17th, 24th, 25th, etc; The manager of the team that finished in third place makes the 2nd choice, 7th, 10th, 18th, 23rd, etc; The manager of the team that finished in second place makes the 3rd choice, 6th, 11th, 14th, 19th, 22nd; The manager of the team that finished in first place gets 4th choice, 5th, 12th, 13th, 20th, 21st, etc., until selections are completed.

NOTE 1: Because there are no players returning to a particular team, and because coaches cannot be named until the draft is completed, Options 2 and 4 (see "Options On Sons, Daughter and Siblings" in this chapter) do NOT apply when using the draft selection plan.

NOTE 2: When the second phase of this draft method begins, the draft order starts over, regardless of which team drafted last in the first phase.

Synopsis: This regulation would mandate that all divisions of play re-draft each season. (All teams would place all returning players back into the pool for re-draft each year.)

ITEM 5 – AFFECTS REGULATION IX – SPECIAL GAMES – ALL DIVISIONS

(f) Tournament teams may participate in Special Games only after June 15th.

Synopsis: This would allow Tournament teams to participate in Special Games after June 15th.

ITEM 6 – AFFECTS 3.03 – SENIOR LEAGUE BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL

Senior/Big League Designated Hitter Rule:

1. At the beginning of a game, each manager may list on the lineup card a designated hitter to bat throughout the game for a designated player in the regular lineup.
2. Only a player not in the regular batting order may be used as a designated hitter.
3. In the event a manager decides to use the designated hitter as a defensive player, the player must remain in the same position in the batting order, unless otherwise replaced by a substitute. If so, the player for whom the designated hitter was batting must be removed from the game. Such player may re-enter the game once, but only in the batting order position of the former designated hitter, who must be removed.
4. This rule does not change the regular rule governing the use of pinch-hitters.

Synopsis: This would allow teams in the Senior division to utilize a designated hitter.

ITEM 7 – AFFECTS REGULATION VI – PITCHERS – BASEBALL (A)

(a) Any player on a regular season team may pitch. Exception: Any player, who has played the position of catcher for four (4) or more innings in a game, is not eligible to pitch on that calendar day.

Synopsis: This would prohibit catchers from moving to the pitcher position in an effort to prevent arm injuries.

ITEM 8 – AFFECTS REGULATION VI (K) – PITCHERS – JUNIOR AND SENIOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

(k) A player may not pitch in more than one game in a day. (Exception: In Junior/Senior/Big League Divisions, a player may be used as a pitcher in up to two games in a day.)

Synopsis: This would allow Junior and Senior League players to pitch in two games in a day.

ITEM 9 – AFFECTS REGULATION IV – THE PLAYERS – MAJOR LEAGUE AND JUNIOR LEAGUE SOFTBALL

A 12 year old player who is otherwise eligible under all conditions would be eligible for selection to either the Major League or Junior League Division tournament team. However, a local Little League's board of directors could decide that players league age 12 in the league will not try out for the Junior League Division, and will be eligible for only the Little League ("Majors") Division/Minor League Division.

A player may be selected to participate in one or more regular season games on a Major League team and/or a Junior League team. If a player participates in sixty (60) percent of the Regular Season games in each division as of June 15, he/she will be eligible to participate in either the Major or Junior Division from that point forward in regular season and/or tournament play.

If a player only participates in sixty (60) percent of the Regular Season games in one division (Major or Junior) as of June 15, he/she is only eligible to participate with that particular division from that point forward in regular season and/or tournament play.

A player may only be selected to and participate on one (1) tournament team.

Any player who is league age 12 must be permitted to play in the Major Division.

The local league cannot force any player who is league age 12 to play in the Junior League Division.

NOTE: If a player pitches in one or more regular season games on a Junior League team, he/she will be ineligible to pitch in the Major Division from that point forward in regular season and would only be eligible for the Junior League tournament team.

Synopsis: This will allow 12-year-olds additional opportunities and playing time, as well as provide leagues with added flexibility.

ITEM 10 – AFFECT RULE 1.07 – SENIOR AND BIG LEAGUE SOFTBALL

1.07 – The pitcher's plate shall be a rectangular slab of whitened rubber 24 inches by 6 inches. It shall be set in the ground as shown in Diagrams 1 and 2, so that the distance between the front side of the pitcher's plate and home base (the rear point of home plate) shall be – (1) Minor League: 35 feet; (2) Little League (Majors) and Junior League: 40 feet; (3) Senior and Big League: 43 feet.

Synopsis: This would mandate Senior and Big League softball players to pitch from 43 feet.

ITEM 11 – AFFECTS RULE 2.00 – ALL SOFTBALL DIVISIONS

Bunt is a batted ball not swung at but intentionally met with the bat and tapped slowly. Holding the bat in the strike zone is considered an attempted bunt. In order to take a pitch, the batter must withdraw the bat backwards away from the ball. (Tee Ball: Bunts are not permitted. Batters are not permitted to take a half-swing. If the umpire feels the batter is taking a half-swing, the batter may be called back to swing again.)

Synopsis: This would redefine the "Bunt" and mandate batters to remove the bat from the strike zone in order to take a pitch.

ITEM 12 – AFFECTS RULE 6.09 (B) – MAJOR LEAGUE SOFTBALL

The batter becomes a runner when –
(b) Major/Junior/Senior/Big League: the third strike called by the umpire is not caught, providing (1) first base is unoccupied or (2) first base is occupied with two out. NOTE: A batter forfeits the opportunity to advance to first base when he/she enters the dugout or any other dead ball area.

Synopsis: This would allow Major League Softball players to begin learning batter/runner skills at an earlier division and align Little League's rule with other softball organizations.

ITEM 13 – AFFECTS RULE 7.08 (A) (5) – MAJOR LEAGUE SOFTBALL

Any runner is out when –
(a) (5) Major Division: the runner fails to keep contact with the base to which that runner is entitled until the ball has been released by the pitcher on the delivery. (NOTE: A local league may adopt a rule that requires the runner to keep in contact with the base to which that runner is entitled until the ball has been batted or reaches the batter, or be called out.)

(b) Minor League/Tee Ball: the runner fails to keep in contact with the base to which that runner is entitled until the ball has been batted or reaches the batter.

Synopsis: This would allow Major League Softball players to begin learning the catcher position and skills at an earlier division and align Little League's stealing rule with other softball organizations.

ITEM 14 – AFFECTS RULE 8.03 (C) –JUNIOR, SENIOR AND BIG LEAGUE SOFTBALL

(c) If the pitcher desires to walk a batter intentionally, all pitches must be legally delivered to the batter.

Synopsis: This would mandate a pitcher throw four balls to walk a batter.

ITEM 15 – AFFECTS TOURNAMENT SELECTION OF FIELDS – ALL LEVELS OF PLAY

Selection of Fields

All shall be played upon Little League fields approved by the Tournament Director. Exception to this rule can only be made with consent of the Regional Director.

Local leagues selected to host a section, state, division, region or world series tournament must have an approved safety plan.

Fields must be enclosed with an outfield fence. Outfield fences for the Little League Division must be a maximum of 225 feet from home plate and a minimum of 195 feet; for 9-10 and 10-11 divisions, a maximum of 225 feet and a minimum of 180 feet; for Junior League, a maximum of 350 feet and a minimum of 250 feet; for Senior League and Big League, a maximum of 420 feet and a minimum of 280 feet. (Softball: Fence should be 200 feet). Tournament Directors should not permit portable outfield fences to exceed 200 feet (300 feet for Junior/Senior/Big League Baseball). Conventional dirt mounds are approved for tournament play. A request to use an artificial mound for tournament play may be submitted to the Tournament Committee in Williamsport (through the District Administrator/ Tournament Director and Regional Office). An artificial mound must not be used unless approved in writing by the Tournament Committee for a specific tournament site/level, and only for the current year. The Tournament Director or assistant shall judge fitness of the playing field before the game starts.
9-10 & 10-11 Year Old Divisions, Little League: The on-deck batter's position is not permitted.

Synopsis: This would mandate any field selected to host a tournament to have an approved safety plan.

ITEM 16 – AFFECTS TOURNAMENT TEAM PRACTICE – ALL LEVELS OF PLAY

Little/Junior/Senior/Big League: Try-outs or practices by tournament teams shall not be held before June 15. Tournament team practice may only take place against other teams within the same or contiguous districts in the same division, providing such practice is done out of uniform. (Little League accident insurance for tournament teams will not go into effect until June 15, or the date of the release of the names of tournament Team members, whichever is later).

9-10 & 10-11 Year Old Divisions: Try-outs or practices by tournament teams shall not be held before June 15 or two weeks prior to the start of the tournament. Tournament team practice may only take place against other teams within the same or contiguous districts in the same division, providing such practice is done out of uniform. (Little League accident insurance for tournament teams will not go into effect until June 15, or the date of the release of the names of tournament Team members, whichever is later).

Synopsis: This would allow Tournament Teams to practice against other players in their district and contiguous districts.

ITEM 17 – AFFECTS TOURNAMENT CURFEW – JUNIOR, SENIOR AND BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL

Curfew
No inning shall start after 11 p.m. prevailing time (midnight prevailing time for Junior/Senior League; 1:00 a.m. prevailing time for Big League). NOTE: An inning starts the moment the third out is made completing the previous inning.

Synopsis: This would allow a later curfew for the upper age divisions.

ITEM 18 – AFFECT TOURNAMENT MANDATORY PLAY – 9-10 YEAR OLD DIVISION, 10-11 YEAR OLD DIVISION, LITTLE LEAGUE AND JUNIOR LEAGUE BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL

MANDATORY PLAY 9-10 Year Old Division, 10-11 Year Old Division, Little League and Junior League: If a tournament team has thirteen (13) or more eligible players in uniform at a game, then every player on a team roster shall participate in each game for a minimum of three (3) consecutive defensive outs and bat at least one (1) time. If a tournament team has twelve (12) or less eligible players in uniform at a game, then every player on a team roster shall participate in each game for a minimum of six (6) consecutive defensive outs and bat at least one (1) time.

Synopsis: This would mandate that tournament teams with twelve (12) or less participants be required to play everyone for six (6) consecutive outs and bat at least one (1) time.

ITEM 19 – TOURNAMENT REGULATION GAME – ALL LEVELS OF PLAY

REGULATION GAME: Each tournament game must be played to the point of being an official game:

(b) Regulation games (when a winner can be determined) terminated because of weather, darkness or curfew must be resumed if the visiting team takes the lead in their half of the inning and the home team does not complete their at bat or take the lead in an incomplete inning. This does not mean games suspended or delayed by weather that may still be resumed before darkness or curfew on the same day.

Synopsis: This would mandate that games terminated because of weather, darkness or curfew will be resumed if the lead if the visiting team takes the league in an incomplete inning.

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