### Disengage-able bases on non-league fields?

**Q:** “The question came up regarding the (new disengage-able) base rule on non-League owned fields? Are we responsible to mandate the use of disengageable bases on non-league fields, such as school or privately owned fields? Please let me know whatever you can about this issue!”

**Rich Kellar, safety officer**  
South Snohomish Little League

**A:** Yes, all fields you use must have bases that disengage from their anchors, whether your league owns the field or you just are allowed its use. This would include game sites and practice sites. The rule (page 46) states: Rule 1.06 ... “Leagues are required to ensure that first, second and third bases will disengage their anchor.” It does not specify the field’s ownership, and like all Little League rules, applies both to practice and games.

If you do not own the field, and are concerned that the school or other body may not see the value in replacing the bases with the disengage-able anchor style, I would use the material on Little League’s website and in past issues of ASAP News to help them see how much this is going to reduce injuries. And not just for your league’s players, but everyone who uses the fields. Here are some links to more information on disengage-able bases:

http://www.littleleague.org/Learn_More/rules/Disengage-Able_Base_Rule.htm

---

**Promote Safety Empowerment**

*Make everyone feel part of your safety effort.*

“One of our Little League players was swinging a bat outside of the backstop, outside of the dugout; the bat slipped out of his hand and hit a spectator in the head. The spectator’s left ear was lacerated, he had a blow to the head, and his glasses broke. He went to the ER and was treated there. Is the spectator insured by our Little League coverage or does he watch the game at his own risk? If he is covered, will you please let us know what we need to do to follow through with the claim?”

*Sara Speicher, District Safety Officer  
Minnesota District 1*

From a safety standpoint, this is the reason Little League removed the on-deck position for the Little League (Majors), Minors and Tee Ball Divisions. Young children do not pay enough attention to people around them, and are not careful when swinging a bat. Leagues need to have policies that will keep situations like this from occurring.

You should report this injury on your Liability Insurance form. Unlike the player accident policy, each individual claim for liability is reviewed on the individual merits of the case. If the league did everything it could to stop this from occurring (volunteers keeping players on the field and not swinging bats), the league would not be at fault for the injury.

This injury provides an opportunity to raise safety awareness on this issue. Awareness and empowerment are key. Work with everyone to be aware of the potential for injury when someone is allowed (even through inobservance) to break the rules. Empower volunteers and parents to step in and stop unsafe actions. A poster on this topic is online (“Don’t Swing It”):  
www.littleleague.org/programs/asap/signs.asp

---

**National Athletic Trainers’ Association**

The National Athletic Trainers’ Association (NATA) provides a Coach Emergency Action Card to help coaches know exactly what to do in an emergency. Use this as a guide to create your own card, or download it from the Resources for Parents and Coaches at  
http://www.nata.org/consumer/index.htm