

6-3-3 Equal Playing Time System for Players in Little League

Proposed by al and AL of the Little League Education Program

THE PURPOSE

The purpose of the 6-3-3 system is to help Coaches and Managers be fair to all players on their team from the Little Als to the BIG Als. It is designed to make sure that all players get the chance to develop skills, game savvy and have fun with the Little League experience. All players should be played a minimum of 3 innings per game and often get the chance to experience to play a complete 6 inning game.

This playing time approach takes all of the pressure off you as a coach because you have a system in place that is fair to everybody. It makes it really easy to do the lineups and parents really cannot question your approach.

If winning is more important to you than being fair and developing all players then you won't use this system.

SHARE YOUR PLAN WITH PARENTS AT A TEAM MEETING

Call a parent meeting to share your approach with players and parents. Share your approach with all of the parents *before* the season at a parent meeting. Tell the players and their parents that you use a system that is set up to be fair to all players and gives every player a chance for equal playing time during the year. Invite the parents to keep track of the number of innings their son or daughter plays and to let you know if you start to favor some players over others. This way the parents will understand your expectations and realize that no one is special when it comes to playing time, not a your son or daughter...and not the Big Als on your team.

IMPLEMENTING THE 6-3-3 SYSTEM

Here is how it works for a team that has 12 players.

Game #1

6 Players start the game and play six innings...the complete game.

3 Players start the game and play the first 3 innings then sit the rest of the game

3 Players sit out the 1st 3 innings then go into the lineup to play the last 3 innings.

Game #2

The 6 players that played 3 innings in Game #1 get to start and play six innings...the complete game.

The other 6 players that played the complete game in Game #1 now play 3 innings each

3 start the game and play 3 innings and come out of the lineup.

3 players sit out the first 3 innings then go into the line up to play the last 3 innings.

Game #3

Just follow the sequence so that each player plays 6 innings one game then 3 the next game then back to 6 the next and so on.

A FEW SITUATIONS THAT WILL COME UP DURING THE SEASON

What happens if a player never comes to practice?

It is a reasonable expectation for all players to attend practices. If a player refuses to come to practice it would be fair to reduce the number of innings to 3 even on game days when it is their turn to play 6 innings and the complete game. The give players that attend all of the time a chance to play the few extra innings that are now available.

What if a player does not get to the diamond on time on game days?

It is a reasonable to expect players to get to the field 30 minutes before game time to get warmed up and stretched out for the game. If a player is late for the game if they were scheduled to start move them to the one of the spots in the lineup playing the last 3 innings of the game. If they were scheduled to play 6 innings they now only play 3.

What happens if a player chooses to miss a game to do something else, go to a birthday party, go on holidays or to study for a test?

They just miss whatever number of innings they were scheduled to play. As a coach you do not need to try to make up the innings that they missed. They just come back into the rotation wherever it is at.

How do I reward the players that are keen and committed?

Players that come to every practice, are on time for games and make Baseball/Softball a priority end up getting extra playing time because some of the other players are not as keen and committed.

What if I have 13 players on the team, does this system still work?

Equal and fair playing time is still the goal. Just adjust your system and rotation so that a minimum every player gets at least 3 innings.

What if a game is rained out or a 10 run rule shortens the game up to 4 innings?

If you see the shortened game as a likely event make your switches after 2 innings so everyone gets at least 2 innings. Or you can play it out as per plan and as the year goes on it will probably even itself out with other rainouts and shortened games.