

Copper Hills Little League

League ID: 403-12-13



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Manager's Handbook

Table of Contents

Section	Contents
1	Manager Roles and Overview
2	Practice Planning and Drills
3	Field Setup and shutdown procedures
4	Parent Communications

Manager Name

Section 1 – Manager Roles & Overview

Thanks much for taking on the Manager's responsibilities this season. You have an opportunity to make a positive impact on a lot of kids this season. Everyone who played Little League or other youth sports have great memories of our favorite manager or coach. We remember they were always positive, very organized, ran a great practice, we had a ton of fun, and we probably had a pizza party after the season.

Please use this handbook as a resource to:

1. Define your role
2. Organize your team – including a checklist for pre-season and in-season activities.
3. Set up great practices
4. Find other resources to help you throughout the year.

MANAGER'S ROLE

1. MOTIVATOR

- a. Your team is often a reflection of you. Be positive. Be organized. Have fun. Your role is to keep everyone on the team engaged and motivated. Baseball is the most individual of the team sports. Teams win or lose, but hits, errors, strikeouts, walks, ERA, etc. are all very individual. It is easy for kids to get frustrated. Stay positive.
- b. See website for expanded manager role information, but our primary function is to ensure the kids have fun, are safe, and become better baseball players and better teammates.
- c. SET YOUR TEAM EXPECTATION RIGHT AWAY and reinforce them as the year goes on. "Play hard", "Have fun", "have a positive attitude", "know what to do at your position". These are all the focus of a Little League manager.
- d. IDEA 1 – instead of awarding a game ball for great play, assign a team captain for every game. This way you don't have to worry about lesser players never having a game that gets them some recognition & responsibility. You can rotate through the entire team as the season progresses. The team captain:
 - i. Bats first
 - ii. Leads the team out for the pledge
 - iii. Says the pledge if you are home team
 - iv. Leads the team out for handshakes after the game
- e. IDEA 2 - Be sure to accentuate your players' game highlights in your weekly emails update, especially those who do not get highlights very often.
- f. Allow kids to try different positions, even if they are a little uncomfortable (never sacrifice safety). Every kid might not catch or play first, but everyone should get a shot at pitching if they desire it. Put them at ease beforehand if they want to try pitching, but are uncomfortable. Tell them you will come to the mound after 3 batters to see how they are doing and, when you visit (if they are struggling), tell them they have X more batters and you will switch them out. Stay positive. Even one strike should be celebrated.

2. COMMUNICATOR

- a. Set expectations with both parents and players right away and follow up each week with an email to the team.
- b. Call or email your entire team before the first practice. Let them know who you are, when the first practice is, when the parent meeting is (typically at first practice), and let them know that they can contact you anytime regarding anything, but all correspondence from then on will typically be email.

- c. Set up a team website. We have done this for you. Parents can upload pictures and update their son's or daughter's availability for games as well. It will take a short time to learn and will save you at least 20 hours throughout the season.
- d. Send a weekly email to the team. I can't stress this one enough. Email should include highlights and kudos for the games / practices over the previous week and the schedule for the coming week. Putting some rah rah stuff in there and highlighting good plays goes a loooong way with parents. A couple comedic lines and game highlights will make you manager of the year.
- e. Set expectations every practice and game. Sit with players for 2 minutes before each practice and game and reinforce what the team is about – play hard, have fun, know your job, get better as a ball player. Tell them the practice schedule. Review for 2 minutes at the end what they learned and what you want them to work on at home before the next get together.
- f. Pitching. Tell your players and parents that pitching is fluid and entirely at the manager's discretion. Pitchers may pitch shorter or longer than scheduled. They might not pitch at all when scheduled or be called on to pitch when they were not scheduled. Making sure they know this at the start of the season will reduce complaints 90%.

3. DELEGATOR

- a. DELEGATE much of your responsibilities to maintain your sanity!! CHLL is a 100% volunteer organization. Make sure your parents know that we are all volunteers and that they are part of the team as well. Let them know that we will ask them to be part of CHLL and their team organization by pitching in.
- b. Assistant Coaches. You will need at least 2 good assistant coaches and it will help a lot to have an additional one or two parents step up to help. Tell your parents to bring their gloves to practice as well. The more volunteers you have to run drills, the more you will be able to break your kids down in to smaller groups for better individual instruction.
- c. Team Parent. It is imperative you find a parent to coordinate the parental/family volunteer responsibilities. The Team Parent should be responsible for creating the Snack Bar schedule for your team (each team must assign one parent for EVERY game)!! If you want parents to bring after game snacks, the Team Parent should coordinate this as well. Assign someone to do this even if they sound mildly interested and then wash your hands of it entirely.
- d. Score keepers / pitch counters. Find parents or an asst. coach to do at least the pitch count. Some managers like to keep the book, others like to coach the bases. Whatever your preference, your score keeper should be able to keep the book such that you can interpret basic stats. Don't worry so much if getting on base was a hit or an error.
- e. Umpires. Most divisions require teams to provide umpires their own games. If you can get one or two of your parents to umpire a game or two, that is perfect to lighten your burden. Try to umpire at least 2 or 3 games yourself. It is a great way to pick up ideas from other coaches and see the other teams' players in action. It is also a good way to see kids in action when you consider All Star voting. If you need help with coverage or you want to hire an umpire or need some rule interpretation, you can contact CHLL Umpire in Chief.
- f. Field Maintenance. Have one or two of the parents help your team with field set up before the game and cleanup after the game. The procedures for field set up and field closing are in the managers' handbook online.
- g. Working at Home. You will find it difficult to work with players individually at practices during the season. During the first or second practice, give your parents some drills they can do at home. Stress good fundamentals and good form. You may also assign one or two of your coaches a specific job for the team (i.e. hitting coach, pitching coach).

4. EDUCATOR

- a. It is your job to make your kids better baseball players. You will do this by putting together great practices and giving your kids things to work on at home between practices.

- b. Practices. Always come to practice with a plan!! Sit with kids for 2 minutes after warm up and tell them the plan. Have your practice. Sit with them for 2 minutes after practice. Tell them what they learned and give them 2 specific skills to work on between practices.
- c. Drills. There is a list of 20 good drills included to help you fill up a practice. The CHLL website and many other Little League / baseball sites have other drills you can try.
- d. Be prepared! While the kids are warming up, review the practice schedule with your coaches and volunteer helpers to let them know what drills they will be running and how the kids will rotate through the drills. Having lots of assistants helps!
- e. Rules. Between innings, use teaching moments in a game to ensure the team understands any plays on the field. Baseball has a lot of rules and many of the kids are not familiar with all of them.
- f. Attitude. Practices are the time to be constructively critical and push kids to develop good habits and skills. Games are the time to be overwhelmingly positive and focus on playing hard and having fun.

MANAGER'S TIMELINE AND CHECKLIST

Pre-season / Early practices checklist.

1. Call your team. Introduce yourself and welcome them. Let them know you are open for input, but make sure they understand where and when that input is appropriate. Let the players and parents how you will communicate with them (such as all correspondence from you will be via website or email).
2. Collect medical release forms. Keep them with you for ALL practices and games. Kids cannot play without the release form filled out.
3. Set up your email distribution list. Ask parents to let you know if they want email addresses added in addition to their primary contact (i.e. work email, grandparents email).
4. Send your introduction email / team letter. There are some great introductory emails in the Managers handbook online.
 - a. Player expectations – official expectations online at CHLL site
 - b. Parent expectations – official expectation online at CHLL site.
 - c. Bring water to every practice.
 - d. Cups required for catchers, recommended for all.
 - e. Pitching is fluid and 100% at manager's discretion.
 - f. Team roster (for carpools)
 - g. Coaches
 - h. Your contact information
 - i. Pre-season practice schedule
 - j. Give them your President's email as well as the Player Agent email and let them know if they ever have issues, they can contact them.
 - k. ASK FOR VOLUNTEERS. Tell them every parent is expected to be part of the team.
5. Set up you team website. This will take one hour and save you 20 hours. Make sure all parents are set up properly to receive messages from the site.
6. Have a parent meeting at your first practice. Reinforce everything you stated in your initial email and field questions.
7. Set up solid practices. Lots of fundamentals in the early season. Get the kids back in baseball mode after winter. See "Drills" section for ideas. Always have a plan for practice!! As you get closer to the season, incorporate more game situations and quick scrimmages.
8. Get all your volunteers in place. Team Parent, Snack Bar. Assistant coaches. Field Maintenance. Umpires. Etc.

In-Season

1. Weekly Captains. You should have enough games to have everyone on the team be captain for a game. Announce the upcoming captain in your weekly email and highlight their achievements. See above for role of the captain.
2. Weekly Emails. Keep your weekly emails going.
3. Make lineups before the game. See sample lineup on the CHLL website. Microsoft Excel is great for this. Fill out all 6 innings. Print 3 copies. One on dugout wall. One for scorekeepers. One in your pocket. Encourage your kids to take responsibility for knowing the inning and what position they play. First baseman brings a ball. One or two outfielders bring balls out too.
4. For the Major Division and above, keep basic stats. This will help to manage the team and keep All-Star voting fair at the end of the year. Offensive – AB, H (don't worry if rules hit or error), K, BB, SB, XBH. Pitching – IP, K, BB.
5. Practices. Should build on basic skills, game situation, and incorporate any 'learning moments' from the previous game.
6. Stay positive and have some fun yourself!!

SAMPLE Lineup Card



Majors BB - Braves

4/6/2013	Game #1					
Batting Order	Inning 1	Inning 2	Inning 3	Inning 4	Inning 5	Inning 6
Joey (Captain)	CF	Sit	3B	3B	1B	Sit
Zach	P	P	Sit	CF	CF	RF
Billy	3B	3B	RF	Sit	P	P
David	Sit	CF	CF	1B	Sit	2B
Jose	LF	Sit	SS	SS	3B	Sit
Victor	SS	SS	Sit	C	C	1B
Tommy	Sit	LF	LF	2B	Sit	C
Brandon	RF	RF	1B	Sit	SS	SS
Gabe	2B	Sit	P	P	2B	Sit
Johnny	C	C	Sit	RF	RF	3B
Mike	Sit	2B	2B	LF	Sit	CF
Todd	1B	1B	C	Sit	LF	LF
Runs						
Outs						

Section 2 – Practice Planning and Drills

Each practice should begin with about 10 minutes of warm up. An active warm up (jogging, high knees, side shuffles) followed by 5 – 10 minutes of throwing is recommended. See the Managers' Handbook online for some details on throwing technique.

A 90 minute practice should have time to warm up, do 4 different drills, and end with a speed scrimmage or some fun. To assist setting up effective practices, please see a potpourri of drills to choose from below. Mix these in with scrimmages, game situations, and teaching points from the previous game.

You can make a game of many of these drills. Divide your squad into two or three teams and give points in the various drills for catches, accurate throws, etc. Losing team rakes the field.

DRILLS FOR GREAT PRACTICES

If you would like to explore on-line, here are some websites with information and loads of drills.

- www.qcbaseball.com
- www.theoleballgame.com
- www.baseballtips.com
- www.youtube.com – search for “baseball drills” and you will find tons of them

1. INFIELD DRILLS

a. Slow grounders between cones – set two cones 10 feet apart. Player starts in the middle. Coach is about 10 feet away. Roll grounders to player alternating between cones. Have them shuffle side to side to get to balls and roll it back to you. Work on moving their feet and keeping good form. 6 reps per player. This drill can progress to harder grounders and wider cones (or no cones), requiring backhanded catches and quicker movement.

b. Skilz Glove or bare hand – Players use a flat Skilz Glove or barehand (with a TBall or tennis ball). Requires using both hands to field ball.

c. 2nd Base / SS drill – One line at 2B. One line at SS. Alternate grounder to each. Player who fields the ball flips ball to the player covering 2nd base. Switch lines after your turn. Works on covering the bag, good underhand throws (not too hard, not too soft). Make sure player covering the bag is not in the base path of a runner coming to 2nd.

d. Slow rollers to 3B side with runners at home running to 1B.

e. Double Grounders – Players at 3B, SS, 2B, and 1B. Two coaches hitting grounders. Coach 1 hits grounders to 3B who makes throw to 2B. Coach 2 hits grounders to SS who makes play to 1B. Switch positions after 5 minutes. This drill gets through a lot of grounders in a short time and requires good throws. You can switch up who throws to whom as well.

f. Full Infield with base runners or with game situations. Call out the situation before hitting and review where the play is. Make sure all your infielders are moving to the correct spot on every grounder.

2. OUTFIELD DRILLS

a. Drop Step – Pass Routes. Player starts out 10 feet in front of coach. Coach points left or right and the player takes a drop step, turns hips his and shoulders, and runs at a 45 degree angle away from the coach (like a Post pattern in football). Coach throws a pop up that the player has to run under and catch. Ensure the player plants their feet after the catch and makes a strong throw back to the coach.

b. Hard Charger – Need a line of players in CF and a catcher. Coach throws a sharp grounder to CF. Player charges hard, fields ball on the run, and makes a hard crow hop throw to home as if he is throwing out a runner trying to score.

c. Angles / backups – Player in LF and CF. Throw hard grounders and one hops anywhere in between the players. Players work on correct angles to the ball and correct angles to back up the other outfielder.

d. Shoestring Catches – Have player lineup 30 feet in front of coach. Player starts running towards coach. Coach throws short popup such that player has to extend and make a “shoestring” catch.

e. Home Target – Players lineup in CF (or any OF position). Position a target at home (player, coach, trash can). Coach throws grounder or pop ups to player. Player must deliver an accurate throw to home. Throw MUST hit the target. This drill encourages strong low throws. One or two hitters are as good as throws on a line.

3. BASE RUNNING

a. Relay race – set cones at 1st and 3rd so the runners loop outside the first cone approaching the base and then stay inside the cone after the base. Divide team in half. Team, 1 starts at 2B. Team 2 starts at home. The runner on each team has to carry a ball and hand to next runner so there are no early starts.

b. Run through first – Practice full steam run through first with a STOP sign 10 feet past the base. They do NOT have to loop to the right to not be “in play”, they just cannot make a move towards second. Practice looking to the right to see if there is an overthrow and listening to coach’s voice for instruction.

c. Tag up at 3rd – You can coordinate this with an outfield play at the plate drill. Have runner tag up and leave at coach’s command. Practice good slides.

d. First base decision – set up cone outside baseline before first. Have runners run to first and the give various signals – “stay”, “go to second”, “make a turn”, “back to the base”.

e. Lead off from 2B or 3B – Practice lead offs from 2nd after ball crosses home plate. Stay alert and off the base. You are only required to return to the base when the pitcher has the ball. The runners can advance on overthrows on the throw from the catcher back to the pitcher. These do not count as steals.

4. THROWING

a. Golden Glove – After warm ups, have players stay with their throwing partner. Partners throw back and forth. If a duo’s ball hits the ground, that pair is out. Progressively move the kids farther apart. Last team standing wins the “Golden Glove”.

b. Cutoff Man Relay Drill – Split your kids into two teams. Put each team into a line with about 30 feet between each player in line. Start the ball at one end and have the teams throw down the line and back again. Each player in line should act as if they are the cutoff man. Give a good target. Catch and turn the right direction (turn toward your glove hand). Make a quick and accurate throw.

c. Around the Horn - Put players at all infield position plus a catcher. Hit grounders and make the play to 1st. After 1st base catches the ball, he starts it around the horn 1st to 3rd. 3rd to 2nd. 2nd to 1st. 1st to home. Catcher makes throw to 2nd with SS covering and making the tag as if a steal. Only perfect rounds count for points.

d. Beat the Clock – Same as “Around the Horn” but time the team to see who has the best time. You can also track times over the year.

e. Pickle Drill – Have a runner in a run down between bases. Fielders run with ball in hand. Make sure they “follow their throw” and cover the base they are throwing towards after they through. Ensure they minimize throws and force the runner back to their original base.

5. HITTING

a. Tee Work – Great for developing good swing mechanics. Start with a good stance. Drive the ball straight or downward (upward swings are great for T-Ball but not for baseball). Quick hands. Good form. Keep their head still and stay on the ball through the swing. You can swing one-handed too – use a lighter bat.

b. Soft Toss – Same skills as tee work. Works more on timing. Make sure they keep their head on the ball. You can take a Sharpie and make black dots on some balls and mix them into the bucket. The player must say whether the ball had a dot or not.

c. Soft Toss Batting Practice – You can toss BP from the 1B line and have fielders field the balls and make plays.

d. Batting practice – BP is a necessity. Use it to build confidence as well as skills. Notes: 1) If the player is really struggling making contact, have them move to soft toss. Do not have a player miss 20 in a row! It is a confidence crusher. 2) Make sure you mix your pitching speeds. Slower pitching is good to get timing down, but you must work in faster pitches for the players to get used to game speeds.

e. Bunt with Partner – Each player gets a partner. Player has helmet and bat. Partner is on one knee 15 feet away with 5 or so balls. Partner throws softly overhand and batter bunts.

f. Bunt Zones – Draw three “zones” on the field (or mark off with cones). The two zones down the 1st and 3rd base lines are worth 3 points. The zone directly in front of home is worth one point. Divide players into two teams and keep score.

6. FULL INFIELD / GAME SITUATIONS

a. Coach Hit with Base Runners – Make sure runners wear helmets.

b. Outfield Cutoffs – Players in LC, RC, 2B, SS, 3B. Practice base coverage, hitting the cutoff, relay throws the 2B or 3B. OF positions backing up on grounders. Outfielder on opposite side of the action should run to the edge of the infield and back up any throws.

c. Speed Scrimmage – Great way for last 15 minutes of practice. Divide players into two teams. Coach pitches. Extra coaches may be needed for OF positions. One team bats. One team in field. Each team gets three outs or each player bats twice, whichever comes LAST. Play one or two innings.

Sample Practice Plan

(Teach it, Try it, Game it)

0:00 to 0:10	Warm-up throwing	
0:10 to 0:15	Stretches and light jog around outfield	
0:15 to 1:00	Individual Stations - Divide into 4 Groups (3 kids per group is best)	
	Fielding station	_____
	Baserunning station	_____
	Hitting station	_____
	Pitching station	_____
1:00 to 1:05	Water Break	
1:05 to 1:40	Team Stations – Divide into 2 Groups	
	Outfield drill	_____
	Infield drill	_____
1:40 to 1:55	Game Situation	_____
1:55 to 2:00	Team Meeting Items	_____
	Next Practice/Game	_____

Section 3 – Field Set-up and Shut Down Procedures

Pre-Game Setup - HOME TEAM is responsible for setting up the field prior to game time.

Step #1 Fill divots in batter's box and pitcher's mound.

Step #2 Fill any divots in field made by fielders or sliding base runners (especially past 1st base, before 2nd base, before 3rd base and before home plate).

Step #3 Remove any obvious debris from playing area (rocks, sticks, trash)

Step #4 Wet the infield dirt in the playing area, pitcher's mound and batter's box (do not create standing water).

Step #5 Drag entire dirt playing area with drag mats and rake.

- Infield drag from the outer perimeter and work your way into the center. This will prevent lips from forming at the edge of the grass and moves the dirt that has been forced outwards from play into the middle of the field.
- When you are completed dragging the field please do not pull the mat onto the grass area and deposit the extra dirt. Please use a rake to spread that excess dirt evenly.
- Home plate drag in a circle from the outer perimeter into home plate
- Pitcher's mound drag in a circle from the outer perimeter into the rubber

Step #6 Line batter's box

- Lay template down as shown in Figure 1. (4" from the plate for majors and below). The short side of the template goes on the pitcher's mound side of home plate.
- Using your hand or a tool, drag an indicator line in the dirt on the inside of the template making the outline of the batter's box.
- Repeat on other side
- Line the batter's box to the outline that was made from the template. Refer to figure #2

Figure #1 – Lining up batter's box template

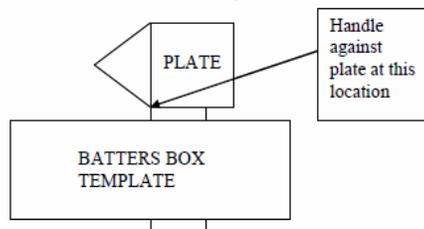
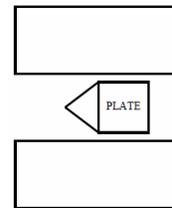


Figure #2 - What it should look like after you are finished lining the batter's box



Step #7 Insert bases

- Pop-up Safety bases are located in the field storage boxes
- Remove orange hole covers from the base fittings in the infield
- Clear out dirt or debris that will prevent the base from setting firmly on the infield.
- Insert the bases

Step #8 Line foul lines

- Lining infield - Roll out the STRING GUIDE by placing the nail behind the point of the plate, string outside of either first or third base, and all the way to the outfield cut.
- ALWAYS LINE THE INFIELD ON THE INSIDE OF THE STRING (FAIR TERRITORY OR ANOTHER WAY OF THINKING ABOUT IT IS THE SIDE OF THE STRING CLOSEST TO PITCHER'S MOUND)

Step #9 Put all field grooming and lining equipment back neatly. Throw out any empty chalk bags or paint cans.

Post-Game Clean-up – Both Teams are responsible for Post Game Cleanup

- Both teams pick up trash and debris from dugouts and spectator area/bleachers
- Home team puts away bases and any other field equipment

Section 4 – Parent Communications

Parent Meeting Outline

Introduction

I-Why are we here?

II-Expectations of the Manager and Coaches!

III-Expectations of the Parents!

IV-Miscellaneous Items!

I-Why are we here:

- a) For the children to have fun
- b) To help them develop their potential as a baseball player
- c) To teach them when they play for a team they represent themselves, their parents, coaches, managers and town. This means, good sportsmanship, no arguing with the umpire, no throwing bats or gloves etc. No finger pointing. Being part of a team is encouraging others even when they fail.

II-Expectations of the Manager and Coaches:

- a) Most importantly I will exhibit, at all times, the positive behavior that I expect the children to display
- b) I will create an environment so the children can have fun and learn the fundamentals of baseball.
- c) I will speak to your children with respect and dignity; but also with authority. It is important that they understand that inappropriate behavior will affect the teaching of the other children.
- d) My objective will be to build their self esteem and confidence.

III-Expectations of the Parents:

- a) To be a supportive parent for the manager, coach and team.
- b) Cheer for all players on both teams.
- c) Please leave the coaching during the game and practices to the managers and coaches. It is confusing for a child to hear too many different things while they are trying to play. They will often look to you for support, please provide as much encouragement as you can. **(It would be extremely helpful to read aloud the second page of the code-of-conduct here)**
- d) I will teach the children to respect the umpire, so it is important that you do as well.
- e) Placing CHLL practices and games as a priority among their non-school sports activities.

IV-Other items to cover:

- a) Schedule of practices
- b) Recruit a volunteer for Team Parent - someone that will help you with communication, snack bar schedule, team snack schedule, etc.)
- c) Recruit a volunteer(s) for Field Maintenance – Home Team is responsible for field set-up and shut down assign an individual or individuals to do this routinely.
- d) Snack Bar duty. Get them to sign-up for their dates at this meeting. You are responsible for supplying one person for every game.
- e) Let them know that LL is entirely volunteer and the more people that help the lighter the load for all.

Sample Parent Letter or E-mail

CHLL Baseball - Minor Division – Team 3

TEAM INFORMATION:

There are ___ players, ages ___ to ___ years. A roster is attached for your use in contacting other team parents for car pooling, etc.

PRACTICE:

Practice will be held two to three times per week until the season starts. Then we will have two games a week and one or two practices. Practice schedules will be published weekly with as much advanced notice as possible. It will be about 1 ½ hours to 2 hours. Please plan to arrive 5 to 10 minutes before this time. The location will be _____.

Help from parents will be needed at practices if you plan to stay around (and are not taking care of siblings). If you have a glove, bring it along and join in. Even if you can't play ball, just helping with organizing the kids is helpful.

If practice must be cancelled due to rain (or other unforeseen event), you will receive an e-mail if time permits. I will call you if time does not permit or if you don't have access to e-mail. Feel free to e-mail or text me anytime. There is (or is not) a need to call if your child will miss practice.

GAMES:

All games are played at the _____. A game roster will be sent out when the final schedule is complete. The full game schedule will also be available on the CHLL website

Players must arrive 30 minutes before game time. If your child will not be at the game, please let me know as soon as possible, so game rosters can be made accordingly. The games are six innings & subject to a two hour time limit.

EQUIPMENT:

The only required equipment is a glove. A water bottle is also recommended for practice and games. If they have bats, bring them along. The league will supply balls and helmets for use by everyone.

All male catchers must wear cups. All other male players are encouraged to wear cups.

TEAM AND INDIVIDUAL PICTURES

Picture Day is April ___ at _____. All players who can make it should be dressed in full uniform. The players get an individual and team picture taken. Even if you do not plan to purchase a photo, showing team support is encouraged. The team photo goes on a nice plaque that is delivered to the sponsor to show the league and our team's appreciation for their financial commitment to supporting us. A picture packet will be handed out shortly that will have instructions for ordering.

VOLUNTEERS

All Parents are needed as volunteers in some way. Please decide if you will be an assistant coach, team parent, field maintenance, umpire or snack bar volunteer.

SNACK BAR

We are required to provide a volunteer in the snack bar for every game (10 minutes before to 10 minutes after). The team will not receive their game balls from the snack bar until the volunteers have arrived. We will have a schedule for when each family is responsible. If you would like, in the snack bar, there is a list of youth volunteers that you can pay \$10 to fulfill your responsibility.