



## Tee Ball – Frequently Asked Questions

### General information regarding 2019 T-Ball Season:

Registration for Kirkland National Little League opens in December 2018 and is done online at <http://www.kirklandnational.com/registernow>. First you will need to login or create a new member account. If you require additional instructions or assistance with registration please email [director.tball@kirklandnational.com](mailto:director.tball@kirklandnational.com)

Our spring season is set to begin with pre-season practices, starting as early as March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Our season will officially begin on April 17<sup>th</sup> (the following Wednesday after LWSD Spring Break) and end on June 16<sup>th</sup> – giving us 8 full weeks to run the T-Ball program. No events will be scheduled for Memorial Day Weekend (May 24-27).

T-Ball is scheduled to have 2 events each week:

Practices or Games will be held on Wednesdays at a local elementary school field or 132<sup>nd</sup> Square Park starting between 5 - 6pm. Games will be held each Sunday at Big Finn Hill Park starting at 1:00pm or 2:30pm.

At the T-Ball age level, Little League recommends limiting activities to 45-75 minutes. All KNLL T-Ball events are scheduled to run no longer than 1 hour; Managers may request players to show up 10-15 minutes early on game days for warm-ups.

**Please note:** this schedule may require some slight adjustments depending on the following factors: field scheduling and availability, number of registrants and teams formed for T-Ball (Baseball / Softball).

T-Ball registration closes on March 08, 2019. After registration closes, teams will be formed and you will be contacted by the Team Manager soon after to inform you which team your child is playing on and they will provide the schedule for practices and games.

### Why are events scheduled for Wednesday and Sunday?

In the past, KNLL has provided consistency with the scheduled days for T-Ball and it resulted in positive feedback from the parents. This is pretty much the only level we are able to accomplish this, as scheduling becomes a bit more complex in the upper divisions.

One of the challenges we face with scheduling is field availability. Traditionally, KNLL does not regularly schedule events to occur on Sundays, so last year we decided to take advantage of that availability and schedule T-Ball games to occur at Big Finn Hill Park on Sundays and overall it was a success with the parents and players. Big Finn Hill Park provides a great atmosphere for baseball games and the T-Ball players were very excited to play on the “real baseball fields” that the big kids play on. We are targeting start times of 1:00 and 2:30pm in an attempt to avoid any conflicts with church services. Wednesday was selected as the other T-Ball event day, more simply, because it is in the middle of the week, so the days off are spaced out equally.

### Why does the T-Ball season start later than the higher divisions?

The upper levels must start earlier so they can play a full season and have their playoffs before district tournaments begin. The Washington weather is not always the most favorable for baseball/softball activities in March. Since we do not have playoffs in T-Ball, we have elected to start our season a little later in hopes of reducing the likelihood for bad weather and rain-outs.

## What equipment do I need to purchase for the season?

Baseball/Softball Glove and Protective Safety Cup (only required for boys)

Optional / Recommended: Baseball/Softball Pants (full length athletic pants or sweats are a viable alternative), Cleats, Baseball Belt and Socks – You may want to wait until you have been contacted by the Team Manager with team name and color scheme before purchasing these items. Some families prefer to purchase their own helmet and bat for their child – that’s ok, but it’s not required – please see the next sections regarding bats and helmets!

A team hat/visor and jersey (shirt) will be provided by the league. Additionally, each team manager will receive gear bags with shared equipment: helmets, bats, balls, tees, and other equipment to use for practices and games for the duration of the season.

## Bat Regulations:

### The USABat Standard only applies to Boys T-Ball (Baseball):

“Effective on January 1, 2018, Little League Baseball implemented and adheres to the new USABat standard.”

<https://www.littleleague.org/playing-rules/bat-information/usa-baseball-bat-standard-faq/>

Essentially for T-Ball (Baseball), players can still use older models of bats, however, they must be 26” or shorter and you will need to purchase a USABat sticker that reads “ONLY FOR USE WITH APPROVED TEE BALLS”.

Stickers are \$2 and can be ordered from the following website:

<https://usabaseballshop.com/products/usabat-tee-ball-sticker?variant=44877922632>



### The USABat standard does not apply to Girls T-Ball (Softball).

Full details on the Little League Bat Rules can be found at the following link:

<https://www.littleleague.org/playing-rules/bat-rules/>

## Helmet Regulations:

LLOR 1.16 and 1.17 state that “helmets may not be re-painted and may not contain tape or re-applied decals or stickers unless approved in writing by the helmet manufacturer or authorized dealer.” Such written approval may not be recorded by KNLL, D9, Western Region, or Little League International. Therefore, the burden falls to the parent or guardian to obtain such written approval and the manager to ensure the alterations are in compliance with that approval.

Helmet attachments are products that are sold separately from the helmet that the consumer is responsible for attaching to the helmet. These include c-flaps and similar face guards. Such attachments generally require altering the helmet by drilling holes and removing padding. These alterations void the NOCSAE certification of the helmet, making it illegal to use in Little League play. Little League International provides a clearinghouse of approved attachments here: <https://www.littleleague.org/playing-rules/modifying-helmets-with-additional-attachments/>

During pregame inspection of the equipment by the umpires, written approval shall be presented for any alterations to helmets. Umpires are empowered to adjudge if those alterations are in compliance with LLOR and the written approval. Any altered helmets without written approval shall be removed from play.

LLOR 1.16 and 1.17 advise that “altering helmets in any way can be dangerous.” Therefore, KNLL strongly discourages any alterations to helmets

### **Where can I purchase baseball/softball equipment?**

There are a number local sporting goods stores and online websites from which to purchase gear. KNLL purchases our league's gear locally from Risan Athletics.

Risan Athletics - <http://www.risan.com/>

### **Do Boys and Girls play on the same team in T-Ball?**

Boys play with baseballs (safety balls) and girls play with softballs (safety balls). Since they use different balls, we make our best effort to match-up baseball vs. baseball and softball vs. softball. However, sometimes there are not enough T-Ball registrants & teams to achieve this goal. If we have a shortage in teams, we may make an effort to align our Softball T-Ball program with Kirkland American Little League; otherwise, we may have to schedule softball teams vs. baseball teams.

If you have children of both genders enrolled in T-Ball, please notify the Director of T-Ball after registration and I will try to align their schedules so your children do not have to be in two different places at the same time or we can discuss alternative options - [director.tball@kirklandnational.com](mailto:director.tball@kirklandnational.com)

### **Why is there no coach pitching in T-Ball?**

KNLL closely follows the guidelines of a Tee Ball Program which was developed by Little League International for entry-level players. The program lays out a schedule with practice plans which are intended to engage the children for the full hour and create an exciting and enjoyable experience. Since our T-Ball program is intended for first-year participants and our next level is coach pitch, we instruct coaches to use the tee for the entire season. This helps kids develop a level swing and also ensures that we are maximizing the full hour for playing time.

<http://www.littleleagueu.org/article/2016/12/15/Little+League%C2%AE+Tee+Ball+Curriculum>

### **Can I submit a request to be placed on a team with a specific coach or friend?**

Yes, you can make this request and I will do my best to accommodate it. Typically this is done during the registration process. If you are already registered and want to make a request, notify the Director of T-Ball prior to the closing date of T-Ball registration, which is March 08, 2019 – [director.tball@kirklandnational.com](mailto:director.tball@kirklandnational.com)

### **How are teams formed?**

In the lower divisions, KNLL typically tries to form teams by elementary school. Since we need to distribute the players to balance the team sizes, there are no guarantees that your child will be placed on a team with players all from their same school. If you know of a specific player or coach that you want to be placed on a team with, please refer to the previous FAQ category.

In T-Ball we are targeting team sizes of 7-8 players. We do not utilize catchers in T-Ball and outfielders are not really necessary either, however, we still want to ensure that there are enough players to run a practice and field a team when families miss a scheduled event (travel, illness, etc.). When forming teams, we will also look at the grade levels and make an effort to create balanced teams to avoid a big age disparity between opposing teams.

## How do I volunteer to become a manager or coach?

KNLL is 100% run by volunteers – this includes Board Members, Umpires, Managers, Coaches, Scorekeepers, and more. We cannot successfully run the league without the help of our parents. T-Ball does not require the fulfillment of as many positions as the higher divisions, but we still require volunteer Managers and Coaches to run our program.

Many view T-Ball as a parent/player activity – even when parents cannot commit to the larger duties of a Manager or Coach, they can still be actively involved in their children’s season as Team Parent volunteers and help out when available and needed by the coaching staff. The players benefit when they have more individual instruction and development on the field.

To ensure the safety of the KNLL participants, anyone that wants to participate in baseball/softball activities (in any capacity) is required to register as a volunteer and complete a background check. Registration is done online at [www.kirklandnational.com](http://www.kirklandnational.com) – similar to registering a player, but now you are registering yourself as a volunteer. If you have additional questions about registering or what is required of the different roles contact the Director of T-Ball – [director.tball@kirklandnational.com](mailto:director.tball@kirklandnational.com)

KNLL has recently partnered with the [Positive Coaching Alliance \(PCA\)](#) to further develop our coaches. Additionally, we provide established Tee Ball curriculum manuals, a training clinic, and safety training for our coaches, so now is a great opportunity to get involved as a parent in youth sports.

## What is the difference between a manager and a coach?

Essentially, the team manager “takes ownership” of the team as the *Head Coach*. They lead the practices (plans) and manage the game day line-ups (requires more involvement, specifically in the higher divisions). Managers are the primary focal point for conducting correspondence with the league and they flow-down information to the rest of the team.

Coaches support the managers by assisting with drills in practice and in the dugout & on-the-field during games.

Typically teams are limited to 1 manager and 2 additional coaches. In T-Ball there are many additional opportunities to help the team by registering as a “Team Parent”. As a Team Parent, you are an approved volunteer and allowed to be on the field during practices to help with coaching activities (when help is requested by the Manager).

Please Note: Additional information (e.g. team details, schedules) will be provided by Team Managers after teams are formed and we approach the beginning of our season.

You can find more information regarding Kirkland National Little League at [www.kirklandnational.com](http://www.kirklandnational.com) or send any additional inquiries to the Director of T-Ball at [director.tball@kirklandnational.com](mailto:director.tball@kirklandnational.com)