

Coaches,

It is important to discuss the relationship between Little League/Mid School Baseball and AAD/USSSA in the Albuquerque area. It has always been (and will remain) the policy of the AAD/USSSA program to encourage all its participants to also participate in their local Little League programs. While one of the cornerstones of this program is to allow the team managers to recruit, organize and coach their team as they see fit (for the most part), I have always discouraged managers from prohibiting their players from participating in Little League programs.

We have always scheduled games on Sunday's so there is no conflict with kids participating in both programs. There are enough facilities in the area (in some age divisions) to schedule Saturday games but it is my not to conflict with the Little League programs.

Think big picture here where do club players first come from Little League. AAD/USSSA doesn't offer 4u-7u programs for a reason. Those age kids have not developed to the point where their skill set exceeds the daily challenge that Little League offers and if you want the club programs to offer the most competition and challenge for your team, Little League is where those skills are first realized. Little League programs have hundreds of dedicated volunteers whose goal is to expose, nurture and develop kids in baseball. I (personally) don't want to dilute the quality of this program or become a sanctuary for the less experienced kids whose parents had a "run in" with their local Little League program or who aren't willing to donate time doing field maintenance, selling candy or working a concessions stand.

Some of the benefits of Little League participation for club teams:

- Additional practice time for kids – conditioning is always a challenge in the spring
- Additional game situation development – when has an extra 6-8 at bats a week been bad?
- When other kids see club players, playing Little League, they develop faster
- It allows kids to develop at defensive positions not utilized by their club team

The only caveat with playing in both programs is pitching. Please be aware of your players who pitch on their Little League teams and don't over work them.

It is still (and should be) a highlight of every 12 year old to represent their neighborhood Little League during their district and state All-Star activities. Please encourage your kids, especially through age 12, to sign up for their local Little League program this spring before the deadline passes.

Thank you,
Dana