

Intermediate Baseball - What Is It?

Mill Creek Little League officially has one year under our belts of Intermediate Baseball – and it was a great success! The first new Little League division since 1999 was introduced in 2010 as a pilot program, but became an official division in 2013 for players ages 11-13, culminating in an international tournament and World Series. Intermediate baseball utilizes 50' pitching distance (LL is 46') and 70' base paths (LL using 60') as well as using advanced play rules.

Dave Wetmore, Little League Intermediate (50/70) Baseball World Series Tournament Director, explains that this new division facilitates an easier transition for players as they move up from standard Little League Baseball® fields (46-foot pitching distance and 60-foot base paths) to Junior, Senior and Big League fields (60'6" pitching distance and 90-foot base paths). It gives these players ages 11-13 the chance to advance their skills while getting used to the longer pitching distance, base paths, and faster speed of the game.

“Going from Little League to Junior League was kind of like going from grade school straight to high school and skipping middle school all together. That jump can be tough for some kids,” said Mr. Wetmore. “The 50/70 league allows for an extra stepping-stone for players that might be overwhelmed when they get to Junior League. The bigger field and advanced rules also help bring out the competitive nature for the kids who want to prepare for the next level of baseball.”

Along with the different pitching and base-path distances, the Little League Intermediate (50/70) Baseball Division includes some Junior League rules to allow for more advanced play. Runners are permitted to lead off bases, may attempt to steal at any time, slide head first into bases and an on-deck batter is allowed.

The Little League Intermediate (50/70) Baseball Division gives players and their families the option to continue to play competitive baseball in their local communities with all the benefits of being a part of an officially chartered Little League team.

The end result of a very successful inaugural year for the Little League Intermediate Baseball Division was the World Series tournament. This year, the regions represented were Central, East, Southeast, Southwest, West, Asia-Pacific, Canada, Latin America, Puerto Rico and the Host team from California District 57.

In just its first year, more than 25,000 people traveled to Livermore California, to enjoy this historic tournament. Little League's website had links to a live stream for all of the games leading up to the championship game, which gave thousands of people the opportunity to follow the action. The championship game was televised on ESPN2.

“The response to the new 50/70 league from players and coaches has been great. It has become a very popular division this year and everyone seems to be grasping the program with a lot of excitement,” said Mr. Wetmore.

Here in Mill Creek Little League saw the division as a great way to transition our players into the upper divisions. We started out not really knowing how the division would be received and

throughout the season more and more families found out how exciting and fun the division was. We started the season with 9 players committed to learning the full game of Baseball and the desire to compete at this next level. By the end of the regular season we had a roster of 15 and were competing successfully against the other teams in the division. We played against other districts such as 7,8 and 9 and in all cases did very well.

Our regular season ended with much excitement of putting together an All Star team that would compete at the State tournament in Vancouver, WA. We combined our squad that was eligible with the young men from the N. Everett team and combined took 11 players. The tournament was a great success and the team competed very well losing a heartbreaker to be eliminated.

As the Manager I was very proud of all the players and their commitment to both play and promote the new division. I am looking forward to our sophomore year and the possibility of taking a team to win State in 2014. Please take the time to contact me and find out about our exciting new division.

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