

NWLL BOUNDARIES & PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

Since 1989, NWLL has been affiliated with Little League Baseball. At least for 2004, the Board has decided to continue this affiliation and allow the opportunity for certain revisions to Little League boundary/eligibility rules to be made at a national level.

As a Chartered Little League, one of nine in the District of Columbia, NWLL has been ‘given’ defined geographic boundaries (see below).

NWLL’S GEOGRAPHIC BOUNDARIES

The boundaries of NWLL are all within the District of Columbia and described as follows: Everything south of the DC-Maryland line at the Potomac River to River Road; everything south of River Road until it intersects with Wisconsin Avenue, then west of Wisconsin Avenue between River Road and Porter Street; everything south of Porter Street as it proceeds east to Rock Creek Park and meets Piney Branch Parkway until it intersects with 17th Street NW; then everything south of Monroe Street from the point it intersects with 17th Street until it intersects 14th Street; and everything west of 14th Street as it proceeds south to the Potomac River. Other than the river and the park, three other chartered Little League programs exist to the north and east of the NWLL boundaries.

While it is difficult to imagine how these boundaries were drawn, they clearly have nothing to do with neighborhoods, school districts or any other rational basis.

ELIGIBILITY TO PLAY IN NWLL

Based upon a 1993 agreement among District Little Leagues, adopted by the Little League Charter Committee, **eligibility to play in NWLL was open to all families residing within those boundaries as well as to any child who attended a school within NWLL boundaries and resided anywhere in the District of Columbia.**

NWLL worked hard to promote youth baseball in the schools and the geographic area entrusted to us. Moreover, this work and the 1993 rule itself stemmed from a strongly held position that children between the ages of 6 and 10 profited from playing on teams with their neighbors and classmates. NWLL is committed to this approach and has urged Little League to adopt rules which reflect the realities of big city life.

However, after one LL stretched this rule beyond reason, by allowing kids who signed up for “golf lessons” or other after-school programs to make them eligible for their post-season LL tournament teams, Little League Baseball rescinded the long-standing 1993 eligibility rules.

THE CURRENT ELIGIBILITY RULE

As a result of Little League Baseball’s arbitrary rescission of the 1993 Agreement, **until the rules are changed, eligibility to play in NWLL is limited to those who actually reside within NWLL**

boundaries, defined above. Unlike some other LL's, we do not accept office addresses, rental properties owned by parents, or grandparents'/aunts'/cousins' addresses in lieu of our kids' actual residence.

EXCEPTIONS

Rescission of the 1993 Agreement does not apply to NWLL players who had properly enrolled before the rescission occurred. Those players are “grandfathered” and are eligible to continue playing in NWLL in this and subsequent seasons. Put simply, those eligible under the 1993 Agreement who were enrolled in NWLL before its rescission, can continue to play in NWLL.

In recent years, in large part due to the inapplicability of its boundary/eligibility rules to cities or modern American life, Little League Baseball decided that **players who have been eligible but moved out of our boundaries, can continue to play in NWLL.** This significant change means that formerly eligible players who have moved to Maryland or Virginia can continue to play in NWLL.

Siblings of players who are eligible to play in NWLL but who have moved or adversely affected by a change in eligibility are also eligible to play in NWLL.

WAIVERS

The NWLL Board expressed its fundamental disagreement with the rescission of the 1993 Agreement, which led to discussions last Fall about discontinuing NWLL's affiliation with Little League. Moreover, we were advised, for the first time last Fall, that we must now seek formal “waivers” for any players outside NWLL boundaries -- even though the LL in a particular area does not sponsor a program -- such as T-Ball, Challenger, Prep/Junior, or Senior.

We were urged to utilize Little League's “waiver” process to address these problems, in the hope that general rule changes being considered at an international level this year will radically change the landscape. Based upon these representations, NWLL will pursue “waivers” for players not covered by the “Exceptions” above seeking to play in NWLL this year under the following circumstances:

- A. All players from any geographic area seeking to play in our Challenger program this Spring;
- B. Any player attending school within NWLL boundaries whose residence is in the District of Columbia; or
- C. Under certain circumstances, any player attending school within NWLL boundaries who seeks to play on a team of his or her classmates who are predominantly District residents, no matter where they reside;

Pursuit or filing of “waivers” of eligibility rules shall be at the discretion of NWLL. Those who seek that NWLL do so on their behalf shall file an Application, with appropriate fees (which shall be returned if a waiver is not applied for or if the player is precluded from participating in that season). In addition, upon the request of NWLL, the parent (except Challengers) shall submit a written request for a waiver to be sought, which shall contain a statement of the reasons why you are seeking a waiver and other matters which NWLL may require.

If you have questions about the boundary/eligibility/waiver process, please e-mail NWLL President Bill Menard at <bill@menardmail.com>