

Little League Chronology

1938 -

Williamsport, PA, resident Carl E. Stotz gathers neighborhood children during the summer and devises the first rules and field dimensions for his planned boys baseball program.

1939 -

Little League Baseball is founded by Carl Stotz, who enlists help from others in the community. Mr. Stotz, George Bebble and Bert Bebble are the first three managers. ... A \$30 donation is sufficient to purchase uniforms for each of the first three teams, named after their sponsors: Lycoming Dairy, Lundy Lumber, and Jumbo Pretzel. ... The first season is played in a vacant lot near the outfield fence of Bowman Field.

1940 -

A new playing site is used near the original field. ... A second league is formed in Williamsport, modeled on Carl Stotz's pilot program. ... Rosters are limited by guidelines limiting the area from which the leagues can draw players, a process that continues today.

1941 -

The need for workers and war materials slow the growth of Little League as the nation prepares for war. The field is taken over for war production, and the operation of "Original Little League" moves to Max M. Brown Memorial Park.

1942 -

The "keystone" logo of Little League is created by Carl Stotz and becomes the symbol for Little League Baseball. ... Ed Yonkin pitches the first no-hitter in Little League history, leading Lundy Lumber over Stein's Service.

1943 -

A home run fence is added to Original Little League Field. Until that time, all home runs were "inside-the-park."

1944 -

Carl Stotz receives a draft notice. However, the draft regulations are soon revised, and he remains in Williamsport.

1945 -

Mac McCloskey builds the world's first remote-controlled electronic scoreboard for Original Little League Field. ... A game at Original Little League in Williamsport is suspended, Aug. 14, 1945, after it is announced at the field that World War II has ended.

- 1946 -**
Little League Baseball expands to 12 leagues, all in Pennsylvania.
- 1947 -**
The Hammonton, NJ, boasts having the first Little League outside of Pennsylvania. ... The first Little League World Series (known then as the National Little League Tournament) is won by the Maynard Midgets of Williamsport. ... Allen "Sonny" Yearick, who played in the first Little League game for Lycoming Dairy in 1939, is the first Little League graduate to play professional ball in the Boston Braves organization.
- 1948 -**
Little League grows to ninety-four leagues. ... Lock Haven, PA, wins the second Little League World Series, defeating a team from St. Petersburg, FL. ... U.S. Rubber (now Uniroyal) becomes the first corporate sponsor of Little League.
- 1949 -**
Little League expands to 307 leagues in the U.S. ... A feature about Little League in the Saturday Evening Post spreads the Little League story to more than 14 million people. ... Newsreels highlighting the 1948 National Tournament are seen by millions more, and Carl Stotz is deluged by requests for information on starting a program in hundreds of communities. ... Little League moves to protect its name by incorporating, in the state of New York.
- 1950 -**
The shortest World Series game ever, lasting exactly one hour, is played between Hagerstown, Md., and Kankakee, Ill. ... The first leagues outside the U.S. are formed at each end of the Panama Canal.
- 1951 -**
The first permanent Little League outside of the United States is formed in British Columbia, Canada. ... Little League grows to 776 programs.
- 1952 -**
Peter J. McGovern becomes the first full-time President of Little League Baseball. ... Baseball immortal Connie Mack is a visitor to the World Series. ... Little League expands to more than 1,500 programs.
- 1953 -**
The Little League World Series is televised for the first time. Howard Cosell handles the play-by-play for ABC radio. ... Birmingham, AL., defeats Schenectady, NY, 1-0, in one of only two 1-0 finals in World Series history. ... Joey Jay, who played Little League in Middletown, CT, becomes the first former Little Leaguer to reach the Major Leagues (Milwaukee Braves).

1954 -

Boog Powell, who would later play for the Baltimore Orioles, participates for Lakeland, FL, in the World Series. ... Ken Hubbs, who would win the 1962 National League Rookie of the Year Award with the Chicago Cubs, plays in the Little League World Series for Colton, CA ... Little League Baseball expands to more than 3,300 leagues.

1955 -

Baseball great Cy Young makes his last visit to the Little League World Series before his death in September. Carl Stotz is a pallbearer at his funeral. ... Morrisville, PA, defeats Delaware Township, N.J., 4-3, in seven innings (the first extra-inning Little League World Series championship game). ... A player for the New Jersey team is Billy Hunter, who would go on to play football for the Washington Redskins and Miami Dolphins, and executive director of the NBA Players Association. ... Little League is now played in all forty-eight states. ... Nine-year-old George W. Bush plays his first of four years at Central Little League of Midland, Texas, where he is a catcher on the Cubs. He later becomes the first Little League graduate to be elected President of the United States.

1956 -

An out-of-court settlement of a dispute with the Little League Board of Directors ends with Carl Stotz severing ties with the organization he founded. ... The Little League Foundation is created. ... The first Little League World Series perfect game is pitched by Fred Shapiro of Delaware Township, NJ. ... Little League grows to more than 4,000 leagues. ... The first Little League Congress takes place in Chicago.

1957 -

Monterrey, Mexico, becomes the first non-U.S. team to win the Little League World Series as Angel Macias pitches the first perfect game in a championship final.

1958 -

Monterrey, Mexico, becomes the first Little League to win consecutive World Series championships. ... Hector Torres, who would later play in the Major Leagues, plays for Monterrey. ... Rick Wise, who would also play in the Major Leagues, plays for Portland, OR, in the World Series.

1959 -

The modern protective helmet is developed by Dr. Creighton J. Hale, then Director of Research for Little League Baseball. ... The World Series is played for the first time at its present site in the borough of South Williamsport. ... Little League Baseball now has more than 5,000 leagues. ... The second week of June is proclaimed National Little League Week by President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

- 1960 -**
The first European entry in the Little League World Series is Berlin, Germany. ... The Little League Baseball International administration building is completed. ... The World Series final is broadcast live on television – ABC’s first. ... More than 27,400 teams participate in more than 5,500 Little Leagues.
- 1961 -**
Senior League Baseball is created for players thirteen to fifteen years old. ... Brian Sipe, who would later play quarterback for the Cleveland Browns, plays for the World Series champions from El Cajon, CA ... More than 5,500 teams participate in Little Leagues.
- 1962 -**
Little League Summer Camp opens in Williamsport. ... Jackie Robinson is inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame and is a guest at the Little League World Series. ... National Little League Week is proclaimed by President John F. Kennedy.
- 1963 -**
ABC and its Wide World of Sports program televises the Little League World Series championship game for the first time, with Chris Schenkel calling the play-by-play.
- 1964 -**
Little League Baseball is granted a Charter of Federal Incorporation by the U.S. Congress. ... Danny Yacarino pitches a no-hitter and hits a home run to lead Mid Island Little League of Staten Island, NY, against Monterrey, Mexico, 4-0, for the Series title.
- 1965 -**
Venezuela and Spain are represented in the Little League World Series for the first time.
- 1966 -**
Little League Baseball's first regional headquarters, the Southern Region Headquarters, opens in St. Petersburg, FL ... A rain delay during a World Series game holds up the contest for one hour and thirty-three minutes. ... The game is broadcast in color for the first time on ABC Wide World of Sports.
- 1967 -**
West Tokyo, Japan, becomes the first Far East team to win the Little League World Series title. ... Baseball great Ted Williams is an announcer for ABC. ... Future Major Leaguer Bobby Mitchell plays in the 1967 Little League Baseball World Series for Northridge Little League.

1968 -

The old wooden stands at Howard J. Lamade Memorial Field are replaced with concrete, and the venue is renamed Howard J. Lamade Stadium. ... Big League Baseball for players sixteen to eighteen years old is started. ... Turk Schonert, future NFL quarterback, is a member of the Garden Grove, CA, team in the Series.

1969 -

The Western Regional Headquarters of Little League Baseball in San Bernardino, CA, is opened. ... Newberry Little League participates in the World Series, becoming the first Williamsport-area team to play in the World Series since 1948. ... Taiwan wins the first of its seventeen Little League World Series.

1970 -

The Canadian Headquarters of Little League Baseball opens in Ottawa, Ontario.

1971 -

Lloyd McClendon, who would become a Major League player and later the manager of the Pittsburgh Pirates, hits five home runs in five at bats during the World Series for Gary, IN ... One of the longest games in World Series history is played over two hours and fifty-one minutes as Gary and Tainan, Taiwan battle for nine innings. ... A Little League State Center opens in Waco, Texas. ... Howard J. Lamade Stadium is expanded to increase seating capacity to 10,000. ... The aluminum bat, developed in cooperation with Little League, is first used.

1972 -

Taiwan wins a second consecutive World Series championship for the Far East Region. ... Title IX, giving women and girls greater opportunities at higher levels of athletics, is signed into law by President Richard M. Nixon.

1973 -

Dr. Creighton J. Hale is elected president of Little League Baseball, only the second full-time president in thirty-five years. ... Future Major Leaguer Ed Vosberg plays in the Little League World Series for the runner-up team from Tucson, AZ, and goes on to become the only person to participate in the Little League World Series, College World Series (University of Arizona, champions, 1980) and Major League World Series (Florida Marlins, champions, 1997).

1974 -

Little League rules are revised to allow participation by girls. ... Little League Softball and Senior League Softball programs are created.

1975 -

Non-U.S. teams are barred from advancing beyond regional play because of an over-emphasis on tournament play. ... Lakewood, NJ, defeats Belmont Heights, of Tampa, FL, 4-3, in the final.

- 1976 -** Baseball Hall of Famers Joe DiMaggio, Ernie Banks and Bob Gibson are Series guests as Chofu, Japan, wins that country's third championship, led by Kiyoshi Tsumura, who pitches a perfect game in the semifinal against Europe.
- 1977 -** Future Major Leaguer Charlie Hayes plays in the 1977 Series for Hattiesburg, MS.
- 1978 -** Little League grows to include more than 6,500 Little Leagues for nine-to-twelve-year-olds, 2,850 Senior Leagues for thirteen-to-fifteen-year-olds, and 1,300 Big League programs for sixteen-to-eighteen-year-olds. ... Little League and Senior League Softball teams total more than 7,400. ... Future Major Leaguer Erik Johnson is a pitcher in the 1978 Little League Baseball World Series championship game for San Ramon Valley Little League of Danville, Calif.
- 1979 -** Junior League Baseball is created for thirteen-year-olds. ... Future Major Leaguers Dwight Gooden, Floyd Youmans and Vance Lovelace play for the Belmont Heights (Tampa, FL) team in the Senior League Baseball World Series in Gary, Indiana.
- 1980 -** George Bush, a former Little League coach who is elected vice president three months later, throws out the first pitch for the World Series championship game. ... Big League Softball is started for players sixteen to eighteen years old. ... Belmont Heights reaches the finals of the Little League Baseball World Series, falling 4-3 to Taiwan. Gary Sheffield and Derek Bell, future Major Leaguers, play for Belmont Heights.
- 1981 -** Dan Wilson, later a Major Leaguer, plays for Barrington (IL) Little League in the Little League World Series. ... Derek Bell returns with Belmont Heights, but his team falls to Taiwan again. Bell becomes the first Major League player to have played in two Little League World Series.
- 1982 -** The Peter J. McGovern Little League Museum opens at the Little League International Headquarters complex. ... Future Major Leaguer Wilson Alvarez plays for the Maracaibo, Venezuela, team in the Series. ... Kirkland, WA, defeats Taiwan, 6-0, before a then-World Series record crowd of 40,000 as Cody Webster tosses a two-hitter in the final game, ending Taiwan's 31-game winning streak in Williamsport.

- 1983 -** Baseball Commissioner Bowie Kuhn throws the ceremonial first pitch at the Little League World Series championship game and music star Chuck Mangione plays the Dominican Republic National Anthem. ... East Marietta (GA) National Little League wins the World Series with future Major Leaguer Marc Pisciotta on the mound.
- 1984 -** Seoul, Korea, wins that country's first Little League World Series championship, defeating Altamonte Springs, Fla., 6-2. One Altamonte Springs player is future Major Leaguer Jason Varitek. ... Peter J. McGovern, Little League Board of Directors Chairman for more than thirty years, dies June 30.
- 1985 -** For the first time, ABC-TV carries the Little League World Series championship game live on Wide World of Sports. ... For the first time in baseball history, ABC mounts a micro-miniature camera on the mask of the home plate umpire, Frank Rizzo.
- 1986 -** Baseball Commissioner Peter Ueberroth makes his first visit to the Little League World Series for the championship. ... Bill Shea, president of the Little League Foundation and the namesake of New York's Shea Stadium, throws the ceremonial first pitch.
- 1987 -** The 1947 Little League World Series champions, the Maynard Midgets of Williamsport, are reunited on the field before the championship game.
- 1988 -** Tom Seaver, graduate of Spartan Little League in Fresno, CA, is the first enshrinee of the Peter J. McGovern Little League Museum Hall of Excellence.
- 1989 -** Little League Baseball celebrates its fiftieth anniversary. ... Poland receives four certificates of charter for the first Little League programs in a former Eastern-Bloc country, delivered in person by President George Bush. ... Trumbull (Conn.) National Little League becomes the first U.S. team to win the World Series since 1983 before a crowd of 45,000. Future NHL star Chris Drury is on the mound for Trumbull.

- 1990 -** Little League Baseball launches the first full season of the Challenger Division for mentally and physically disabled children. ... Little League is now enjoyed by children in thirty-nine countries. ... Taiwan regains the championship of the Little League World Series with a 9-0 victory over Shippensburg, PA.
- 1991 -** Taiwan defeats Danville, CA, 11-0 in the final game of the Little League World Series.
- 1992 -** Carl E. Stotz, founder of Little League, dies. ... The Little League World Series undergoes a series of changes -- A "pool" format is adopted in which each team is assured a minimum of three meaningful games in World Series play; A state-of-the-art Musco Sports Lighting System is installed at Howard J. Lamade Stadium, and the first Little League World Series night game is played. ... Long Beach (CA) Little League is named World Series Champion following the disqualification of Zamboanga (Philippines) City Little League. ... Guests at the Series include former Little Leaguers Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, George Will, Tom Selleck and Vice President Dan Quayle.
- 1993 -** Long Beach becomes the first U.S. league in history to win consecutive Little League Baseball World Series championships with a thrilling 3-2 victory against a team from Panama. Long Beach is led for a second year by Sean Burroughs, who pitches two no-hitters in the World Series, and later would later play in the Major Leagues.
- 1994 -** After a record three hour, six minute rain delay, Coquivacoa Little League of Maracaibo, Venezuela, becomes the first Latin American team to win the Little League World Series since 1958. ... Stephen D. Keener becomes the first Little League graduate to be named president of Little League Baseball, succeeding Dr. Creighton J. Hale.
- 1995 -** Hall of Famer Stan Musial throws the ceremonial first pitch for the Little League World Series. ... After a three-year drought, Taiwan defeats Spring, Texas, 17-3, for the world title.
- 1996 -** Little League celebrates the fiftieth World Series. ... Little League's first full-service Regional Headquarters outside the U.S. is opened, in Kutno, Poland. ... The Little League Education Program for Managers and Coaches is launched. ... The John W. Lundy Little League Conference Center is dedicated at Little League Baseball International. ... Taiwan wins a seventeenth series title.

1997 -

Little League and Major League Baseball enter an agreement for the first time, co-producing a magazine that is mailed free of charge directly to nearly 2 million Little Leaguers. ... An all-time record 2,993,760 Little Leaguers participate. ... Sharon Robinson (daughter of the late Jackie Robinson) is a guest at the Little League World Series. ... For the first time, U.S. Regional championship games in Little League Baseball are televised nationally on ESPN2. ... Linda Vista Little League of Guadalupe, Mexico, wins the Little League World Series with a 4-run rally in the last inning. ... The Chinese Taipei Baseball Association decides leagues in Taiwan will not charter with Little League.

1998 -

Little League expands to include ninety-five countries. ... Toms River (NJ) East American Little League wins the Little League Baseball World Series, defeating Kashima (Japan) Little League 12-9 in a championship game featuring eleven home runs and 41,200 fans. ... It is announced that the Little League World Series will expand from eight teams to 16 in 2001, and a second stadium will be built.

1999 -

The number of countries with Little League programs hits 100 for the first time as Burkina-Faso joins. ... Hiramata Little League of Osaka, Japan, wins that nation's first World Series title since 1976, defeating Phenix City, Ala., 5-0. ... Little League begins the first capital campaign in the program's history, to raise \$20 million for a variety of projects.

2000 -

Construction begins on Little League Volunteer Stadium, just north of Lamade Stadium, in preparation for expansion of the Little League World Series from eight to sixteen teams in 2001. ... Fraser Valley of British Columbia wins Canada's first World Series, taking the Big League Baseball title in Tucson, AZ ... Sierra Maestra Little League of Maracaibo, Venezuela, defeats a team from Bellaire, Texas, 3-2, in the Little League Baseball World Series final. ... Little League graduate George W. Bush, son of former President George Bush, is elected to the highest U.S. office.

2001 –

Construction is completed on Volunteer Stadium in time for the expansion of the 55th Little League Baseball World Series. ... George W. Bush becomes the first U.S. President to visit the Little League Baseball World Series, watching as Japan defeats a Florida team 2-1 in the final game. First Lady Laura Bush and Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge also attend. A day earlier, New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani attended a Little League Baseball World Series game involving a New York City team. ... A special field is constructed by Little League Baseball International personnel as President Bush invites Little League Tee Ball teams to the White House for three historic baseball games on the South Lawn. A fourth game, scheduled for Sept. 16, is postponed because of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11.

2002 –

Little League's "Honoring Our Hometown Heroes" program is launched paying homage to law enforcement personnel, firefighters, military personnel and local heroes in thousands of communities worldwide. ... The Little League Parent Orientation Program debuts. ... In the Junior League Softball Division, Windmills Little League of Utrecht, Netherlands, becomes the first European team to win a World Series. ... In one of only three 1-0 final games in Little League Baseball World Series history, Valley Sports American Little League wins the championship against Sendai (Japan) Higashi Little League.

2003 –

In the latest phase of the Little League Child Protection Program, local Little Leagues are now required to conduct background checks on certain volunteers. ... A team from Africa (Cape Town, South Africa) is the first from that continent to advance to a World Series, earning a berth in the Big league Baseball World Series in Easley, S.C.

2004 -

The inaugural Little League Urban Initiative Jamboree is held at Little League International, as eight teams from several states spend a four-day weekend in Williamsport. ... Jack Losch, center fielder for the Maynard Midgets league team that won the first Little League Baseball World Series title in 1947, passes away. Mr. Losch became an All-America sports star at the University of Miami, was a running back for the Green Bay Packers, was an Air Force jet fighter pilot, and retired as a senior executive at General Motors. ... John W. “Jack” Lundy, owner of Lundy Lumber and one of the original sponsors of Little League in 1939, passes away. ... U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney, wife Lynne, daughter Liz, and granddaughters Kate, Elizabeth, and Grace, attend a U.S. semifinal game during the Little League Baseball World Series. ... After more than 50 years of publishing a printed newsletter, Little League converts the “Little Leaguer” newsletter to an all-electronic format. At its peak, the printed newsletter reached 13,000 people four times a year. The e-news reaches 400,000 people each month at the end of 2004.

2006 -

The inaugural Little League World Challenger Jamboree is held in Norfolk, Va. ...World Series participants Chris Drury (1989) and Krissy Wendell (1994) compete for the U.S. for the second time in Winter Olympics. ...A new league age determination date goes into effect. ...Fences at the two World Series stadiums are moved from 205 feet to 225 feet.

2007 -

Following a vote by the Little League International Board of Directors during the 2006 Little League Baseball World Series, the pitch count became a part of Little League Baseball for the 2007 regular season and tournament play. ...For the first time, Japan’s national champion receives an automatic berth to the Little League Baseball World Series. The countries formerly competing with Japan in the Asia Region Tournament merged with the countries competing in the Pacific Region Tournament, to determine the Asia-Pacific Region champion, which qualifies for the World Series. ...Little League International and ESPN signed an eight-year television contract, which provides for continued coverage of the Little League Baseball World Series on ESPN’s family of networks, and expands the coverage of Little League’s seven other World Series tournaments. The contract also allows Little League International to lower charter fees and provide the first 80 volunteer background checks free of charge for each of its chartered leagues. ...The Peter J. McGovern Little League Museum, opened in 1982, celebrates its 25th anniversary.

2008 -

Little League International creates a free on-line coaching resource that Little League managers and coaches can turn to for reference, education, or to stay current with the latest drills and coaching techniques. The Little League Coach Resource Center, located on the World Wide Web at: www.LittleLeagueCoach.org is a free service created by Little League International in cooperation with Cramer Digital Marketing and Event Solutions in Norwood, Mass. ...President George W. Bush welcomes Little Leaguers to the White House as part of the "Tee Ball on the South Lawn" program. Games 18-20 in the series included the first international game with the invitation of a team from San Juan, Puerto Rico. Another highlight for this program was the first 'all-star' game in which one representative from all 50 United States participated in the first "Tee Ball on the South Lawn" doubleheader. ...The New England Sports Network (NESN) and Madison Square Garden Network (MSG) enter into an agreement with Little League International to become the first regional sports networks to televise early round games of the Little League International regional tournament. Televising four games each, NESN aired games from the New England regional tournament and MSG aired games from the Mid-Atlantic tournament. Both tournaments are played at the A. Barlett Giamatti Little League Leadership Training Center in Bristol, Conn., home of Little League's Eastern Region Headquarters. ...The Transatlantic Region at the Little League Baseball World Series is discontinued in favor of separate Europe and Middle East and Africa (MEA) Region designations. This change creates an opportunity for each country to have its own national champion represented at the respective regional tournaments, regardless of whether the teams are predominantly children of United States' expatriates or native to the country where they live. ...Little League and its equipment donation partner, Pitch In For Baseball®, enter into a strategic partnership to expand the assistance provided to underserved children in Little League programs both in the United States and around the world. In addition, Little League initiates its first equipment collection during World Series Championship Weekend. Pitch in For Baseball® will redistribute all collected items to children in need participating in chartered Little League programs worldwide. ...Orthopedic Surgeon Dr. James Andrews of Birmingham, Ala., the world's foremost authority on pitching-related injuries, was elected to the Little League International Board of Directors. ...Dr. Davie Jane Gilmour, President of the Pennsylvania College of Technology in Williamsport, was voted Chairman-Elect of the Little League International Board of Directors.

2009 -

Little League International completed construction and other renovations to the Administration Building in Williamsport, Pa., adding approximately 12,000 square-feet of additional office space. ... Warner Robins, Ga., was selected as site of Little League's Southeastern Region Headquarters, which was relocated from St. Petersburg, Fla. ... Little League International and the National Professional Fastpitch (NPF) Softball League establish a partnership with additional training and education resources to expand awareness and opportunities for girls who play in the various divisions of Little League Softball. ... Little League's Southwest Region Headquarters in Waco, Texas, was renamed in honor of President George W. Bush, the first U.S. President to have played Little League. ... Little League International and the Baseball Factory formed a partnership to provide youth players worldwide with increased player development and college placement opportunities. ... A time capsule, holding various items of the day, including a scroll listing the current Little League International Board of Directors and staff members and messages from Little League players and volunteers, was placed in the cornerstone of Headquarters Administration building.