



## Little League Baseball and Softball Online

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# Little League International Discusses Composite Bat Moratorium



By Communications Division  
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On Dec. 30, 2010, Little League International announced it had expanded its moratorium on the use of composite bats to all of its baseball divisions, including the Little League (Majors) division, effective immediately.

Because of the moratorium, several common questions have arisen. We have addressed the most common questions below with Patrick Wilson, Little League International's Vice President of Operations.

The announcement regarding the moratorium is here:

<http://www.littleleague.org/media/newsarchive/2010/Sep-Dec/CompositeBatMoratium.htm>

If you have further questions, we encourage you to sign on to Little League's Facebook page. At that page, over the past few days, Little League International staff has answered hundreds of questions regarding the moratorium. The Little League Facebook page is here: <http://www.facebook.com/LittleLeagueBaseballAndSoftball>

By definition, a moratorium is: An authorized delay or stopping of some specified activity. As applied by Little League International, the moratorium disallows the use of all baseball bats constructed with composite material in its barrel.

Information on the composite baseball bats that have received waivers for the Junior, Senior, and Big League Baseball Divisions of Little League can be found here:

<http://www.littleleague.org/learn/equipment/approvedcompbats.htm>

A listing of licensed baseball bats approved for use in the Little League (Majors) Division and below can be found here: [2011 Approved Non-Wood Bat List \(PDF\)](#)

Wooden and aluminum metal/alloy bats are not subject to the moratorium. Bats that have only a metal or alloy barrel (and no other material, unless it is in the end cap of the bat), and if it meets the other standards (length, diameter, etc. for the respective division in which it is used) are not subject to the moratorium, regardless of the composition of the handle or the transition to the barrel.

“The moratorium is not the result of Little League changing its bat standards, or influenced by any relationships with bat manufacturers,” Patrick W. Wilson, Vice President of Operations at Little League International, said. “Rather, it became evident through scientific research, that some composite-barreled bats exceeded the current standard after a breaking-in process. Until that research was in hand there was no data to support an earlier decision. With that said, there are no other moratoriums contemplated at this moment.

“The decision to place the moratorium on composite bats in Little League's baseball divisions is based on the fact that scientific research showed that composite-barreled bats may exceed the performance standard after being broken in.”

At present, no composite bats for the Little League (Majors) Division and below have received a waiver. If and when any models do receive a waiver, Little League International will inform its leagues of that decision. Check here for the current list of approved bats: [2011 Approved Non-Wood Bat List \(PDF\)](#)

On Sept. 1, Little League International placed a moratorium on composite bats in the Junior, Senior, and Big League Baseball Divisions of Little League. Subsequent to that moratorium, some composite bat models have received a waiver and may be used in those divisions.

“Once there was scientific research showing conclusively that the composite bats in teenage play - after a break-in process - exceeded the standards, the moratorium was imposed,” Mr. Wilson said. “That research only applied to the larger bats, like the ones used in high school.

“While to some it might seem that a similar idea would apply to a smaller barrel bat, that's not the way the science works,” Mr. Wilson said. “We needed to wait until there was conclusive scientific research on the smaller barrel bats. Within hours of receiving enough of that data to make a decision, Little League made it, and we let our constituents know about it.”

The moratorium on composite bats, which now applies to all baseball divisions of Little League, does not apply to any softball divisions of Little League.

Local Little Leagues were first informed of the ongoing research in September 2010.

“From the beginning, and throughout this process, we wanted to keep everyone informed,” Mr. Wilson said. “Our intent was to provide local league constituents clear direction regarding composite bats. There is a process through which manufacturers can submit individual models for a possible waiver if they wish to seek it. Going forward, we will let our leagues know which ones meet the standards for the Little League Baseball (Majors) 12-and-under divisions, if any.”

## Frequently Asked Questions – Composite Bat Moratorium

### **Q-1:** How can you identify composite, alloy and half-half bats?

**A:** Most bats indicate whether it is composite or metal/alloy. Look closely at the barrel for its designation and composition. For any others, you would need to check the manufacturer website or call them to see if the specific model has a composite barrel.

Bats that have been manufactured to date may have the Little League name on them, as well as the BPF. However, going forward Little League will not approve new composite bats that have not been tested to meet the performance standard through the life of the bat, and any bat with a composite barrel cannot be used in the Little League (Majors) Division and below. The position also applies to the teenage baseball divisions for bats that have not received a waiver.

### **Q-2:** How does someone identify an older composite bat that is not labeled as composite?

**A:** Older composite bats, or any non-wood bats, would not be allowed to be used in Little League play without the BFP 1.15 printed on the barrel. Additionally, composite bats that have the BFP listed, and may even have the Little League name and logo on them, are now subject to the moratorium.

### **Q-3: What if my bat has a composite handle, and a metal/alloy barrel?**

**A:** If the bat is labeled as having a composite handle and a metal/alloy barrel (and not a composite barrel), provided it meets all the other standards for the division, it is acceptable. The transition from the handle to the barrel can be composite.

### **Q-4: Why did you make this decision right after Christmas?**

**A:** We worked diligently to get the research in place. We didn't have the research information one, three or six months ago. Instead, when the information came to us, we made the decision within hours of receiving it. With that kind of scientific research in hand, not making a decision, or delaying it, was not an option.

In this case, the scientific research showed that composite youth baseball bats that had a BFP rating of 1.15 when new, actually could exceed the 1.15 rating after being used, broken in. That's why we announced the moratorium ... and why we let parents know about the research last September.

### **Q-5: Why are softball bats not covered?**

**A:** To date, there is currently no similar scientific research available on the performance of bats used in Little League's softball program.

### **Q-6: Did Little League do this just to get more royalties from all the new bats that need to be bought?**

**A:** This decision by Little League International was made completely independent of any manufacturer of bats, and was based on performance of the composite bats, as opposed to metal/alloy or wood bats.

The bats used in the research that Little League International commissioned at the University of Massachusetts - Lowell, were bought anonymously by Little League International.

Little League International's royalties from bat sales represents a very small percentage of Little League Baseball, Incorporated's operating budget. For various reasons, our decision to impose this moratorium will result in lower royalties. Despite the fact that we face lower royalties doing the right thing was first and foremost on our minds.

In fact, our District Administrators and League Presidents were informed of the results of the decision before our bat licensees were informed and before any of the bat manufacturers were informed.

The decision making all bats that can be used in any game perform - throughout the life of the bat - within a certain acceptable standard, is the clear and common-sense best answer.

### **Q-7: Is my bat (insert model here) OK?**

**A:** It should be clear that Little League International has not changed the standard.

The BPF remains at 1.15, which is, essentially a measure of the performance of the best wooden bat. But the BPF needs to remain at or below the 1.15 level throughout the life of the bat. That is why we now have a moratorium on some bats.

Until just recently, there was no scientific research available on youth model bats that would show whether or not they maintained the BPF throughout the life of the bat.

A list of bats licensed and approved for use in Little League Baseball (Majors) 12-and-under divisions is available here: [2011 Approved Non-Wood Bat List \(PDF\)](#)

### **Q-8: Are the bat manufacturers going to offer a rebate on the bats that are deemed unusable in Little League?**

**A:** Each bat manufacturer will decide on its return/exchange policy and possible rebates toward the purchase of Little League compliant bats. Check with your local equipment retailer for guidance on possible rebates or returns.

### **Q-9: Does Little League realize even more people are going to go to other organized youth baseball organizations because of this?**

**A:** Ultimately, if other programs, and parents, choose in favor of programs that may not have the same philosophy as Little League, we cannot help that.

We can only make rules and regulations for Little Leaguers, based on the best interests of the children

involved, using data from scientific research. Whether or not any of the smaller non-Little League programs follow our lead is up to them.