

Pinto Local Rules

Updated February 2024

Play is governed by the official PONY BASEBALL RULE BOOK, with the exception of the following:

Team Responsibilities for Games

- **Good Sportsmanship:** Players & Coaches are to salute the parents and other team after each game. Handshake lines are at the coach's discretion.
- **Field Duties:** Each team will designate at least one representative to help prep the field BEFORE your game as well as AFTER your game.
- **Minimum Defensive Innings Forms:** The Manager MUST submit these the day of the game to their division commissioner (penalty of forfeit). The easiest way is for the manager to snap a photo of the completed form and text/email to the commissioner immediately following the game.
- **HOME TEAM** is responsible for providing an adult to act as the **Official Scorekeeper**
- **AWAY TEAM** responsible for providing an adult to act as the **Scoreboard Operator**

Pre-Game Schedule

- Due to time and fairness restrictions, Teams are NOT to use the batting cage in pre-game (pre-game batting can be done with whiffle balls in outfield) or use the infield dirt until taking the field for the 1st inning.
- **Pre-Game Field Prep:** drag and water infield dirt, chalk lines and batter's boxes, uncover mounds, clean base anchors and place bases

Safety and Well Being of the Children

- Concern for the safety of the players, spectators, coaches and umpires will be required during all team activities including games, practices and associated events.
- No practice swings by any player in or around the dugout during the games. A coach must be stationed at the dugout entrance of the team that is at bat at all times.
- NO tobacco or alcohol use is permitted by the coaches or spectators at the park where practices and games are whatsoever.
- Any player who throws a bat that can or does cause injury while at bat is out at the discretion of the umpire.
- Only adults will be base coaches.
- Players must remain in the dugout during the game, bathroom breaks or injuries are only exceptions.

Field: As per West Region Pony Pinto Division Baseball Rules

- **Bases:** bases will be 60 feet apart
- **Pitching Rubber:** distance will be 38 feet (rubber to back of home plate)
- **Dugouts:** 3rd Base Dugout = HOME team and 1st Base Dugout = AWAY Team

Equipment:

- **Bats:** With the exception of the -3 bat (BBCOR certified), all other 2-⁵/₈ inch minus factor bats (-5, -7, -9, etc.) and 2-¹/₄" bats must be certified with the **USA Bat licensing stamp** on the bat in order to be used for league and tournament play. **NO USSSA BATS ALLOWED**
- **Shoes:** plastic/rubber bottom cleats (no metal cleats or spikes)
- **Batting Helmet:** MUST include a facemask (for base runners also!)
- **Pitching Machine:** Single wheel jugs machine will be used
- **Catchers Equipment:** Catchers are required to use a chest protector, shin guards and catchers helmet.

Substitutions:

- No player shall sit two innings, until each player has sat at least one inning.
- Safety: recognize 1st base and pitcher as safety positions and only place players there that best safely play those receiving positions.
- Each player shall play at least once in the outfield and once in the infield in the first 4 innings of the game.
- The infield positions are C, P, 1B, 2B, 3B, and SS. The outfield positions are LF, LCF, RCF, and RF.

Innings/Game Time Limit:

- **Each 1/2 inning is over after 3 outs have been recorded or 5 runs have been scored; whichever comes first** with the exception of the 6th inning, where there are unlimited runs allowed.
- **Maximum innings is 6.** In the event of a tie score after 6 innings, the game is recorded as a tie (except playoff games which must be played out until a winner is decided).
- **No new inning shall start after 90 mins (1:30) of play and there is a drop dead time of 105 minutes (1:45).**
- Four innings (or 3 1/2 innings if the home team is ahead) constitutes a complete game.
- If the home team is ahead by 10 runs or more after the 4th inning the game is considered over due to the mercy rule.

Defense:

- Regular season games will be played with 4 outfielders if more than 9 players are present.
- On the Mustang Field, outfielders must be behind the outfield markers (25 feet off the infield grass) prior to the ball being hit.
- Each team should have a minimum of eight players to start the game. If a team does not have eight players, the game will be considered a forfeit but should still be played for practice and enjoyment of the players.

- To start play, the defensive fielding pitcher must have one foot within the dirt area of the pitcher's mound. They must maintain this position until the ball is hit. The pitcher must set up behind an imaginary line that is perpendicular to the path of a pitched ball and runs through the wheel of the machine.
- Infielders may not start play closer to the batter than 5 feet inside the 1st/2nd and 2nd/3rd base baselines. The intent of this rule is to ensure fairness to the weaker batters.

Batting Order:

- The batting order will include all players at the game
- A player arriving late will be placed at the end of the batting order.

Base Running:

- A runner may leave the base only when the ball is put into play. If the runner leaves early, the umpire will give the runner a warning. A second violation by the same runner will result in the runner being called out.
- Runner may advance only one base on an overthrow per batted ball. (if there are subsequent overthrows on the same batted ball, runners may NOT advance again)
- The play is deemed over when the pitcher has the ball in their possession with at least one foot in the dirt of the pitcher's mound. If a base runner is advancing to a base as the pitcher gets both feet in the dirt of the pitcher's mound, they may continue to the base if at least halfway to the next base, otherwise they must return to the previous base.
- If 2 Runners are on the same base, the play is automatically over & the trailing runner is out.
- SLIDE RULE: Base runners must slide for safety on any close plays (other than 1st) or can be called out. (This call is at the Umpires Discretion)
- Catchers/Fielders must stay out of the base path and stay off the base/plate unless they are making a play on the ball. (Refer to official Pony obstruction rule).
- If a fielder making a play in the base path is knocked down or ran into by a base runner and is prevented from making the play. The runner will be called out.

Batting:

- A batter shall be declared out after failing to hit a fair ball after six pitches are delivered by the pitching machine / coach pitcher. The batter is out if there are three strikes before the sixth pitch. Missed swings are counted as strikes, as are foul balls and foul tips. A batter is not out on a foul ball or foul tip even if it's the 6th pitch.
- No bunting, fake bunting or slashing (show bunt, then swing) is allowed.
- If the player is injured and not able to continue batting, the next player will come up (no out will be recorded, no base awarded)
- There is NO Infield Fly Rule – on a pop up to the infield, base-runners advance at their own risk.

Pitching:

- The Pinto Division will use a pitching machine that will be set at 32 MPH for the first 3 games, 34 MPH for games 4-6 and 36 MPH for games 7-9 and playoffs.
- The pitching machine will be placed at a distance of 38 feet (to the center of the pitching machine wheel) from home plate.
- If a batted ball hits the pitching machine or the coach pitcher, the ball is live and in play unless the ball goes into foul territory or gets stuck under the battery pack, at which time the play is dead and runners go to the bases they were clearly advancing to.
- The pitching machine is considered part of the ground; therefore, if the ball hits the pitching machine, it cannot be caught as a “fly-out” or “pop-out”.
- The feeder/pitcher coach is part of the playing field, and the ball is live after it unintentionally hits the feeder/pitcher.
- A feeder/pitcher coach may offer hitting instruction to a batter during the game (such as where to stand in the box etc.) and instruction to runners while the ball is dead.

Further Rules, Governance of Play:

- Professional umpires will be provided for regular season and playoff games, they will stand behind the pitcher’s mound and make all relevant calls.
- Catchers must be protected with full catcher’s gear when in the crouch or standing off to the side at the backstop.
- Late players: Shall be added to the bottom of the batting order
- Each team will need a minimum of 4 adults to manage the team during the game:
 1. One adult will coach first base
 2. One adult will coach third base
 3. One adult will manage the dugout and the on deck batter – this adult will be positioned at the entrance of the dugout while the team is at bat.
 4. One coach, from the team batting, will run the pitching machine. It is permissible to coach fielders from foul territory beyond first and third bases. Coaches are not allowed on the field during play except for the pitching machine feeders.
- BALL OUT OF PLAY RULE: Due to the unique nature of our fields as well as field conditions the Umpire will designate at the beginning of the game where the out of play areas are. Coaches need to ensure no equipment or spectators are in the designated field of play. MLB Rules are applied to an out of play ball.