



## Meadows Place PONY Baseball Ground Rules Pinto Division (6-8-year-olds)



*Managers are required to have a copy of the rules in their possession for each game. PONY Baseball rules (<https://www.pony.org/Default.aspx?tabid=1026027>) and MLB rules shall apply unless otherwise specified.*

**Objective:** Pinto Division is intended to teach the basic fundamentals of baseball -- as well as the importance of teamwork, sportsmanship, practice, and perseverance. Managers and coaches will teach players to properly swing a bat, catch, throw, and run the bases.

Players are encouraged to experience different positions throughout the season.

### **Sportsmanship**

- Unsportsmanlike behavior will not be tolerated. Umpires will maintain control and have the authority to eject or remove players, coaches, or fans from the facility. Umpires should not be approached after the game under any circumstances.
- Any manager, coach, player, or fan demonstrating unsportsmanlike behavior may be ejected from the game and may be suspended for additional games.
- Razzing, heckling, chanting, or making disparaging remarks or noises directed at opponents in any manner is prohibited. Shakers or noise makers are not allowed. For the safety of all players and to maintain integrity of the game, organized cheering or chanting is not allowed while the pitcher is preparing to deliver the pitch or as the ball is pitched. Like all rules, enforcement is subject to umpire judgment.
- Foul and abusive language will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Cursing or throwing equipment is grounds for an automatic ejection.
- There is a zero-tolerance policy for making threats or taking physical action. Any occurrence will be immediately reported to the Board and the proper authorities.

### **Declared League Age**

- As part of the League registration, each player MUST declare a league age (determined by their age on May 1) for the up coming season. Once a player determines their league age for the season, they may NOT change their league age for the remainder of that season.
- As permitted by PONY baseball rules, MPPB has adopted the "And Under" player age chart, which will allow players to move up one age division, ONLY under the following conditions.
  1. The player's age MUST be within 1 year of the age division they wish to move up to.
  2. The player MUST have played at least 1 full season at the lower division with MPPB (other leagues will not count).
  3. The player's safety and well-being will be a priority for final determining of moving up a division.

### **Player Draft Process**

- Draft day and the draft procedures will be pre-determined by the board prior to the start of the regular season. All coaches or coach representatives shall be present at the player draft. All coaches will receive a list of available players (player's pool).

### **Game Length / Time Limits**

- Maximum of 6 innings, but no inning will start beyond 1 hour and 25 minutes after the official starting time. Games may end in a tie.
- Time begins upon umpire's notification to the managers. Subsequent innings begin the moment the third out is made (or fifth run scores) in the previous inning. The umpire is the sole judge of time.
- The game is completed when the time limit is reached, and additional play will not change the outcome. If time expires while the home team is batting and winning, the umpire shall

announce, "*Time has expired, ball game*" before the next batter enters the batter's box, not during a player's "at bat". If time expires while the visiting team is batting and is behind in the score and can mathematically tie or take the lead, the umpire shall announce, "*Time has expired, we will complete the inning*". If time expires while the visiting team is batting and winning, and the home team cannot mathematically tie or take the lead, the umpire shall announce, "*Time has expired, ball game*".

- If the umpire calls a game due to weather or other hazardous conditions, it is an official game if 3½ innings (home team leading) or 4 innings have been completed.

### Postponed or Canceled Games

- Any game that is postponed or canceled that requires to be made up will use the following format to be re-scheduled.
  1. If a game is postponed due to weather, (or availability of lights, etc.) it shall be picked up at the exact place where left at. Batting order, runners on base, fielding position, score, etc... shall resume as a continuation from where the game was halted. New "pick up" players are NOT allowed for the re-scheduled game.
  2. The make-up game should be attempted to be re-scheduled on the Home Team's next practice. The Home Team has the option to use either its mandatory practice or its optional practice for this game.
  3. The coaches MUST coordinate with the league's scheduling officer (or president) to determine when the make-up game will be played. This will assure that umpire(s) can be scheduled for the game and that the game does not conflict with other games or practices.
  4. Should any team fail to show up or have enough players for the re-scheduled game, the game will be called, and the win will go to the team that has enough players and ready to play.

### Run Rules

- A maximum of 5 runs allowed per inning per team (3 outs or 5 runs will constitute an inning for the offensive team), except no limit on runs scored during the 6<sup>th</sup> inning.
- The game is called if a team is behind by 15 runs after 3 complete innings, 10 runs after 4 innings, or 8 runs after 5 innings.

### Roster

- A minimum of 7 players must be present or the game will be called a forfeit at 10 minutes past the scheduled start time.
- There is no penalty for playing with 7 players.
- The game will be called a forfeit any time a team has fewer than 7 eligible players.
- Defensive alignment is manager's discretion when only 7 players are present.
- When 9 or more players are present, the pitcher and catcher positions must be occupied.
- Players who must leave before the end of the game may do so. Their position in the batting order will be ignored for the rest of the game and no out will be charged.
- If, in the umpire's opinion, a player is unable to continue playing due to injury or illness, the team will not be penalized when it is the missing player's turn to bat.
- Any time the batting order is reduced by an ejection, an automatic out shall be declared in that batting order position.
- Every player present for a game is in the batting order for the duration of the game.
- Any late arriving player(s) shall assume the last position in the batting order, regardless of when they arrive for the game.
- Players not registered with Meadows Place PONY Baseball and not assigned to the team are ineligible. Players cannot participate in more than one PONY baseball division (i.e., Pinto and Mustang) at the same time. Only players who have played in the Pinto division are eligible to participate in the MPPB Pinto All-Star program.

### Pick-up Players

- If teams have fewer than 9 players present prior to the start of a game, they may use another player “pick up” from another team, under the following conditions:
  1. The “pick up” player(s) MUST be registered MPPB player(s).
  2. The “pick up” player(s) can ONLY play in the outfield; they cannot play at the pitcher, catcher, or infield positions. The “pick up” player(s) are allowed to bat but MUST be put at the bottom of the batting order.
  3. The “pick up” player(s) may be from the same division or one division lower. Teams are only allowed a maximum of two “pick up” players. Teams MUST have fewer than 9 players in order to use “pick up” players. Teams may only use “pick up” players to put their team at no more than nine players.
  4. If a team is unable to “pick up” players from another team in the same or lower division to have 9 players, they may “pick up” up to two players from the opposing team, to reach 9 defensive players. The “pick up” players may only be used for outfield defensive purposes; additionally, the players used should be chosen and rotated in such a way as to allow the batting order of the opposing team to continue unhindered.

### Batting

- Only bats approved by PONY Baseball for play at the respective divisions will be allowed to be used. Refer to the official PONY Rule Book for specific approved bats.
- Managers are expected to check each player’s equipment prior to each game. Illegal equipment will be removed from the game with no penalty. No bat shall be used if dented, cracked, modified, or misshaped.
- The penalty for throwing bats is umpire discretion and can result in an out and/or player’s ejection.
- Each batter will be allowed a maximum of five pitches (delivered by a pitch coach), unless a foul ball is hit on the fifth pitch; then, the player will be allowed to continue batting until he or she does not make contact with the ball, or puts the ball in play. Foul tips caught by the catcher are counted as strikes. Five pitches or 3 strikes = 1 out.
- A Coach Pitcher may elect to use the mechanical pitching machine provided by the league.
- Batters are not permitted to bunt or soft swing at the ball. If, in the umpire’s judgment, a batter soft swings or bunts, the pitch is ruled a strike and the ball is dead.
- There will be no base on balls or base awarded for a batter hit by a pitch.
- A fair ball hitting a coach pitcher or coach operating the pitching machine will be declared a foul ball. If, in the umpire’s judgment a coach interferes with a fielder’s attempt to make a play, the ball is dead, and the lead runner is out.
- In the case of batting out of order, regular baseball rules apply -- the player who should have batted (the proper batter) is called out. Any hit or advance made by the batter is nullified.
- Intentional walks are not allowed.

### Base Running

- Base runners are NOT permitted to steal bases. The base runner shall remain in contact with the base until the ball is hit or crosses home plate. PENALTY: If a runner is off the base and the ball is hit, the runner is out, and the ball is in play.
- When the ball is in the possession of an infielder and, in the umpire’s judgement, all play on the runner or runners has ceased, the umpire shall call “Time”. The ball is dead and shall be returned to the coach-pitcher at the mound.
- Base runners may “tag up” after a fly ball is caught.
- A courtesy runner may be used for the catcher if there are two outs in the inning; the courtesy runner must have made the previous out.
- Slide Rule. Runners advancing to any base with intent to break-up a double play or where a tag play is evident must slide into the base or seek to avoid contact with the player who has the ball. The runner must slide, give up, go around, or go back.

- No player shall initiate malicious contact. The question of what is malicious is umpire judgment. PENALTY – The player initiating malicious contact shall be ejected from the game. NOTE: There can be a collision where both players go head over heels and not be malicious contact. The key for malicious contact is “intent”.

### Pitching

- An adult coach or manager (18 years or older) is expected to pitch.
- The coach pitcher must remain in contact with the pitching rubber while pitching. The ball must be thrown overhand. No kneeling or pitching from the knee is allowed.
- The coach pitcher must leave the field, proceeding to foul territory as soon as the ball is in play.
- The coach pitcher shall not direct or coach players in any way while on the mound. The coach pitcher is allowed to communicate with the base coaches if time is called. Umpires shall not permit more than one timeout per half inning. PENALTY: The coach will receive one warning if directing or coaching players and will be removed from the game if it continues. Umpires can provide some latitude with younger Pinto 6-7-year-old players early in the season, as the coach pitcher is in the best position to view the batter's alignment and recommend adjustments for safety reasons.
- The player pitcher position is the only one that can stop the play dead at umpire's discretion once the ball is controlled and both feet are in the pitcher's mound dirt area.

### Defense

- Ten players may be used defensively ... four in the outfield. Free substitution.
- Defensive alignment is manager's discretion when only 8 players are present.
- When 9 or more players are present, the pitcher and catcher positions must be occupied.
- Every player must play at least one inning at an infield position each game by the third inning. Managers should provide every player with an equal opportunity to play infield and outfield to progress their development. Failure to comply with this rule will result in a one game suspension for the manager. A second offense will result in suspension for the remainder of the season or post-season play
- Every player must play at least 2 complete innings by the end of the fourth inning and may not sit out more than 2 innings the entire game (unless a player is ill, injured or refuses to play). Failure to comply with this rule will result in a one game suspension for the manager. A second offense will result in suspension for the remainder of the season or post-season play.
- Good baseball fundamentals will be followed. This means fielders should learn to make throws to the proper base and should be discouraged from running down base runners to make an unassisted out.
- The player fielding the pitcher's position shall take position to the rear of the pitching rubber, on the either side of the coach-pitcher, with both feet inside the dirt area and within 6 feet of the coach-pitcher until the ball is in play. The pitcher may make an unassisted out at any base.
- The catcher shall be located in the catcher's box, directly behind home plate in full catcher's equipment including cup for protection. If cup is not used, catcher must be back closer to the backstop.
- Outfield players must remain behind the outfield arc (on the edge of the outfield grass and dirt of the infield) until the ball is put into play. Outfielders are expected to field their position and begin each swing on the outfield grass. However, if the ball is batted through the infield and beyond the baseline, or is thrown to a player covering a base and is missed, outfielders may record an out by tagging the following assigned bases or tagging a runner advancing to/or retreating back towards the base they came from.  
 Right Fielders- 1<sup>st</sup> Base  
 Center Fielders- 2<sup>nd</sup> Base  
 Left Fielders- 3<sup>rd</sup> Base

Outfielders may also assist with an out by throwing to a player covering any other base. If an outfielder violates the backup rule, the play is ruled dead and the runners advance to next base from where runner began the play.

- No infield fly rule ... infielders must catch fly balls.
- Position players cannot block a base (including home plate) without the ball, or an obstruction call can be made at umpires' discretion.

### **Coaching**

- Teams should have no more than 3 meetings per week, not to exceed 5 hours total, including games.
- Managers must exchange line-ups before each game and should discuss ground rules at the umpire's plate conference before the start of each game.
- Once a game starts, the umpire is in complete control; only the team manager is allowed to question a ruling after a time-out is called.
- Protests are not allowed on judgment calls. A rules protest is allowed and must be made before the next pitch.
- Umpires shall not permit more than one timeout per half inning.
- Players, managers, and coaches shall remain in the dugouts, on the benches or in the prescribed areas throughout the game. Teams may have no more than four coaches in the dugout at any time.
- Scorekeepers or others are not allowed to coach from the stands.
- The two teams playing the first game of the day are responsible for preparing the field for game play. This includes chalking the field, preparing water coolers for both dugouts and placing the American Flag in center field.
- The two teams playing the last game of the day are responsible for cleaning up the field. This includes, removing American Flag from center field, emptying trashcans in the both dugouts and around the field area, picking up all trash in the dugouts, around bleachers and the grass area around the field, emptying water cooler and returning them to the field house with lids off so they can dry out.
- The home team will keep the official scorebook for the game and the visiting team will manage the scoreboard, if applicable.
- All teams are responsible for cleaning up the dugouts, bleacher areas and grass areas around the field following their game.
- Parents should never "coach" from the stands or outside the fences. Please allow your team's on field coaches to do their jobs.
- Pre-game warm-ups should be held in the outfield or common areas – no infield practice before games.
- No jewelry shall be worn by any player, except for medical identification.
- Cell phones, pagers or any other type of communication devices cannot be used on the field of play.
- Dugouts must be cleaned of litter before leaving.
- Tobacco and alcohol in any form is not allowed in the dugouts, buildings, stands or playing areas.

### **Post Season Tournament Rules**

Post Season Tournament play, if applicable, will be determined by the league. Tournament rules will not vary from Regular season rules except for the following:

- Seeding will be determined by: (1) won-loss record, (2) head-to-head, (3) total runs allowed, (4) total runs scored, (5) coin flip.
- Home team is highest seed (lowest seed number), except Home team for the championship game is the team from the winner's bracket, regardless of original seeding.
- Playoff games can NOT end with a tie. All playoff games ending in a tie at the end of regulation time will use the International Tie-Break Rules to determine the winner. There are no time limits on Championship games (all divisions) and will be played until the completion of 6 innings. All Championship games ending in a tie at the end of 6 innings will then go to the International Tie-Break Rules to determine the winner.

- Pick up players WILL NOT be permitted during post-season play.

### **Governing Rules**

Rules not covered by this document shall revert to the Official PONY Handbook and the Official MLB Handbook. Should any situation/incident that occurs during game play that is not covered by any of the above rules, the head umpire on the field will make final determination.