

## **RULES OF PLAY – PURPOSE – *ALL MANAGERS MUST READ***

The purpose of the following rules of play is to provide a structure for all games and to ensure uniformity of game conduct throughout the season. Additionally, these rules are provided to help managers and teams navigate through expected norms of behavior during the season. It is critical to keep in mind that in divisions with scoring and standings, though fair competition is encouraged, use or manipulation of the rules to obtain a specific competitive advantage is both frowned upon and antithetical to the spirit and purpose of PONY youth baseball both nationally and as conducted by the Newport Beach Baseball Association. Thus, every effort should be made to ensure fairness and these rules will be interpreted to maintain competitive balance and provide youth with the opportunity to maximize fair and equal playing opportunities.

### **LITTLE NEWPS (4U)**

This is the first step for children who are introduced to the basics of the game of baseball. This division is designed to be an enjoyable learning and sharing experience for all players and their parents. Good sportsmanship and safety are key aspects to play in this division.

During games, managers and coaches on both teams should assist and encourage players on both teams.

There are no standings, records or scoring. The emphasis is on learning fundamentals and having an enjoyable season. Managers and coaches should exercise patience with the players due to different levels of understanding, skill and attention spans.

Teams will hold one practice per week and will play one game per week. Games are one hour. Every child bats once each inning. Everyone plays in the field.

Teams at this level may consist of friends and neighbors. Managers may request specific players or bring an entire team or a partial team. Teams will range from seven to nine players each.

#### **Use Level 1 Baseballs.**

##### **1. GAME STARTS:**

1. The Manager or a Coach **MUST** have the team roster and the medical release forms for all players at each game.
2. The home and visiting teams both are responsible for setting up the field before each game.
3. The visiting team shall have ten minutes of on-field practice beginning 25 minutes before the scheduled game time and the home team shall have ten minutes practice starting 15 minutes before game time. No pregame batting practice on the field is permitted.
4. Teams will consist of seven to nine (maximum) players.

5. The home team shall be determined by a coin flip before the start of the game. Managers are encouraged to pick a captain for each game and that the captains be present for the coin flip. Allow one of the captains to “call” the coin flip if practical.

2. **UNIFORM:** No team shall make changes to the league issued uniforms.

3. **FIELD DIMENSIONS:**

1. Base lengths are 30 feet. A cone shall be placed two (2) feet behind each base to serve as a reference point. The ball shall be hit off a batting tee placed on the top of home plate.
2. An 18-20’ diameter circle will be placed around the pitching area estimated at 38’ feet.

4. **COACHING:**

1. All managers and coaches shall be adults. **Managers (or a coach) may not leave a practice or game until all players have been picked up by a parent or guardian.**
2. While at bat, a team should have a coach or other parent supervise the team while another acts as a batting coach to set the ball on the tee and to collect balls and place them into a bucket behind home plate. Players shall be seated behind a backstop or in another safe area. The on-deck batter must wait in a safe place. When the ball is in play, the batting coach must remain close to the backstop or in the coaching box behind home plate.
3. When the ball is put in play, coaches should be prepared to duck to become inconspicuous, especially on plays in the infield. Players can neither see over a tall adult, nor should they be required to throw a ball over a coach’s head to the intended target.
4. Players SHALL NOT pitch to other players.

5. **PLAYER EQUIPMENT**

1. Each player shall be permanently assigned a uniform number at the beginning of the season.
2. The names of the players shall **NOT** be affixed to the uniform shirt. (This is a matter of child safety to avoid strangers being able to identify a child by the name on the uniform).
3. Catchers shall wear full protective gear.
4. Shoes with plastic cleats are recommended. No metal cleats are permitted.
5. Aluminum or wood bats only are used. Bats should be no longer than 26 or 27 inches and may not exceed 2 ¼” in diameter.

6. **BATTING ORDER:**

1. The batting order shall contain the entire roster of players with last name and uniform number listed

2. Although all players bat each inning, batting orders shall vary for each game. (The best and easiest way to do this throughout the season is for the player batting first in game #1 to move to the last position in the batting order in game #2, and so on as each game is played. This will allow each player to lead off in at least one game. Other variations are allowed.).

**7. SIDE RETIRED:**

1. After the entire roster has batted.
2. This division does NOT enforce outs.

- 8. REGULATION GAME:** Each game will be a **MAXIMUM** of one (1) hour in length. Game time shall begin from the actual start of a game and not from the scheduled start of the game. At the completion of the time limit the game shall be declared over. There is no limit to the number of innings that can be played in the hour time limit. The goal is to play between 3 and 4 innings.

- 9. SCOREKEEPING:** There will be **NO** scorekeeping of any kind. Each team will be declared the winner of each game.

**10. FIELDERS:** Each team will play all its players in the field, as follows:

1. The player fielding the pitcher position shall be positioned inside the 18' to 20' diameter circle, or otherwise in the space representing the pitching mound and shall keep at least one foot in the circle until the ball is hit.
2. No more than six (6) players shall play in the infield. Infield positions are: pitcher, catcher first base, second base, third base and short stop.
3. Teams are limited to a maximum of three (3) players in the outfield: left field, left-center field, right-center field and right field.
4. Teams with fewer than nine players may place fielders as they choose, such as four or five infielders and two or three outfielders.
5. Outfielders must remain at least fifteen (15) feet behind the base path (or on the outfield grass on most fields) until a ball is put in play. Parents may accompany children in the outfield at the discretion of the manager.

**11. MANDATORY PLAYING TIME:**

1. All players bat and field each inning. Managers and coaches should rotate players among all positions throughout the entire season.
2. Each player shall play at least 1 inning in the infield and 1 inning in the outfield each game.

**12. HITTING:**

1. A batting tee will be placed on home plate and the batter will be allowed five (5) swings to put the ball in play. If a batter has had five (5) swings and has not put the ball into play, a coach should assist the batter to hit the ball gently off the tee. Balls knocked off the tee due to the bat hitting only the tee tubing are to be placed on the tee again for another try.

2. Batting helmets must be worn by the batter and all base runners.
3. No balls or strikes will be called.
4. Bunting is not allowed. A batter must take a full swing.
5. A batted ball must travel a minimum of ten (10) feet in order to be a fair ball. This area will be marked with a 10 foot arc in front of home plate. (Note: home plate is in fair territory so any batted ball that hits home plate first is considered a fair ball as long as it rolls ten (10) feet unless it subsequently rolls untouched into foul territory prior to reaching that distance.

13. **STRIKE OUT:** There are no strike outs.

14. **THROWING THE BAT:**

1. Any player who throws the bat while batting shall be called out and the player's turn at bat will end. This is a safety issue. Parents need to understand this rule.
2. To minimize exposure to a thrown bat, parents, players and spectators should not be allowed to sit or remain too close to the batting area.

15. **DEAD BALL / END OF PLAY:**

1. A play is over once the ball arrives in the 18-20 foot circle around the pitcher's mound. The player with the ball must have some control of it to make the play dead.
2. A player may advance only one base at a time, except for the last batter of the inning. The last batter of the inning hits a "homerun" and all players on the bases at the time may advance home.
3. Guidelines for base advancements: if a player passes the halfway mark of the base path before the ball has been declared dead, that player may advance to the next base. If the player has not reached the halfway mark, the player must go back to the previous base.
4. A batted ball that hits a coach in fair territory, or a ball bucket located in the playing field, is declared dead. The batter is awarded first base and all other runners advance one (1) base.
5. If at any time during the game a throw from a defensive player hits a coach, the ball is dead and the runners advance one base.

16. **BASE RUNNERS:**

1. Base runners **MUST** stay in contact with the base until the ball is hit.
2. Players must touch all bases in proper order when running.
3. Sliding is not permitted for safety reasons.

17. **STEALING:** No stealing is permitted at any time.

18. **PLAYER EJECTION:** Players shall be ejected from the game and receive an additional game suspension for the following conduct:

1. Forearming or tripping runners;

2. intentionally running into fielders; or
3. bad sportsmanship, such as taunting or ridiculing other players.

19. **PROTESTS AND FORFEITS:** There will be no protests or forfeits.

20. **STANDINGS:** There shall be **NO** league standings.

21. **WEEKLY EVENTS:**

1. There shall be no more than three events per week. Events are games or practices at which a coach and more than three team members are present.
2. There shall be no mandatory events on Sunday.

22. **FIELD PREPARATION:** **Both Managers are responsible for the field and the bases (See Rule 1).** The home team is responsible for game balls. The equipment must be put away and dugouts must be cleaned at the end of each game.

**MANAGERS CODE OF CONDUCT: THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MANAGERS IS A PART OF THESE RULES. ALL MANAGERS MUST BE FAMILIAR WITH THE RULES CONTAINED IN THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

## **SHETLAND AMERICAN (T-BALL)**

This is where it all begins as your children are introduced to the game of baseball. T-Ball is a non-competitive division that emphasizes teaching the basic rules and fundamental skills of baseball.

We believe in developing an environment of friendly competition with no emphasis on winning. Everyone plays in the field and everyone bats.

During the week, teams practice once and play once per week. Games are one hour, allowing for approximately 3 or 4 innings. Coach pitching is introduced, but players still hit from the tee if hitting off the coach pitch is unsuccessful.

Teams are assigned based on school area requests whenever possible. Requests to play with friends must be made at sign-ups. League organizers will do their utmost to accommodate requests made on your registration form.

### **Shetland American Rules**

#### **Use Level 1 Baseballs Transitioning to level 5 Baseballs.**

#### **23. GAME STARTS:**

1. The Manager or a Coach **MUST** have the team roster and the medical release forms for all players at each game.
2. The home and visiting teams both are responsible for setting up the field before each game.
3. The visiting team shall have ten minutes of on-field practice beginning 25 minutes before the scheduled game time and the home team shall have ten minutes practice starting 15 minutes before game time. No pregame batting practice on the field is permitted.
4. Teams will be limited to a maximum thirteen (13) players.

24. **UNIFORM:** No team shall make changes to the league issued uniforms.

#### **25. FIELD DIMENSIONS:**

1. Base lengths are to be 50 feet.
2. An 18-20' diameter circle will be placed around the pitching mound estimated at 38' feet.

#### **26. COACHING:**

1. All coaches shall be adults including the Manager.
2. While at bat, a team shall have a first-base coach, a third-base coach and a batting coach (to set the ball on the tee and to collect balls and put them into a bucket behind home plate next to the backstop). When the ball is in play, the batting coach must remain close to the backstop or in the coaching box behind home plate.

3. A maximum of three (3) defensive coaches are allowed; other coaches must remain in the dugout. Defensive coaches should be positioned along the outfield foul lines and in the field so as not to visually impede defensive players or base runners.
4. When the ball is put in play, the coaches will often need to duck to become inconspicuous, especially on plays in the infield. Players can neither see over a tall adult, nor should they be required to throw a ball over a coach's head to the intended target.
5. Players SHALL NOT pitch to other players.

**27. PLAYER EQUIPMENT**

1. Each player shall be permanently assigned a uniform number at the beginning of the season.
2. The names of the players shall **NOT** be affixed to the uniform shirt. (This is a matter of child safety to avoid strangers being able to identify a child by the name on the uniform.
3. Catchers shall wear full protective gear.

**28. BATTING ORDER:**

1. The batting order shall contain the entire roster of players with last name and uniform number listed
2. Although all players bat each inning, batting orders shall vary for each game. (The best and easiest way to do this throughout the season is for the batter batting first in game #1 to move to the last position in the batting order in game #2, and so on as each game is played. This will allow each player to lead off in at least one game. Other variations are allowed.).

**29. SIDE RETIRED:**

1. After the entire roster has batted.
2. Shetland American will NOT enforce outs.

30. **REGULATION GAME:** Each game will be a **MAXIMUM** of one (1) hour in length. Game time shall begin from the actual start of a game and not from the scheduled start of the game. At the completion of the time limit the game shall be declared over. There is no limit to the number of innings that can be played in the hour time limit. The goal is to play between 3 and 4 innings.

31. **SCOREKEEPING:** There will be **NO** scorekeeping of any kind. Each team will be declared the winner of each game.

32. **FIELDERS:** Each team will play a maximum of ten (10) players in the field, as follows:

1. The player fielding the pitcher position shall be positioned inside the 18' to 20' diameter circle, or otherwise in the space representing the pitching mound and shall keep at least one foot in the circle until the ball is hit.

2. No more than six (6) players shall play in the infield. Infield positions are: pitcher, catcher, first base, second base, third base and short stop.
3. Teams are limited to four (4) players in the outfield: left field, left-center field, right-center field and right field.
4. Outfielders must remain at least fifteen (15) feet behind the base path (or on the outfield grass on most fields) until a ball is put in play.

**33. MANDATORY PLAYING TIME:**

1. **ALL** players, including manager/coaches' children, shall rotate among all positions throughout the entire season.
2. Each player shall play at least 1 inning in the infield and 1 inning in the outfield per game.

**34. HITTING:**

1. A batting tee will be placed on home plate and the batter will be allowed to swing until the ball is put into play. Alternatively, if the player is unable to put the ball in play from the tee, the batter will be allowed five (5) hittable pitches thrown by the coach. (Note: The Manager/coach from the offensive team shall pitch, either overhand or underhand at the Manager's/coach's discretion - and preferably from the same level as the batter, e.g., from one knee).
2. If the ball has not been put into play by the fifth pitch, the at bat shall end. The player may be awarded first base in the discretion of the coaches.
3. No balls or strikes will be called.
4. Bunting is not allowed. A batter must take a full swing.
5. A batted ball must travel a minimum of ten (10) feet in order to be a fair ball. This area will be marked with a 10 foot arc in front of home plate. (Note: home plate is in fair territory so any batted ball that hits home plate first is considered a fair ball unless it subsequently rolls untouched into foul territory prior to reaching first base or third base.)

**35. STRIKE OUT:** There are no strike outs.

**36. INFIELD FLY RULE:** The infield fly rule does **NOT** apply.

**37. THROWING THE BAT:**

1. Any player who, after one warning, throws the bat while batting shall be called out.
2. Any player who has been called out twice in one game for this offense shall lose their remaining turns at bat in that game.

**38. DEAD BALL / END OF PLAY:**

1. A play is over once the ball arrives in the 18-20 foot circle around the pitcher's mound. The player with the ball must have some control of it to make the play dead.

2. A player may advance until the ball is dead as described in the above paragraph, but the runner is limited to taking only one extra base on an overthrow. This is to encourage fielders to make plays and throws.
3. Guidelines for base advancements: if a player passes the halfway mark of the base path before the ball has been declared dead, that player may advance to the next base. If the player has not reached the halfway mark, the player must go back to the previous base.
4. A batted ball that hits a coach in fair territory, or a ball bucket located in the playing field, is declared dead. The batter is awarded first base and all other runners advance one (1) base.
5. If at any time during the game a throw from a defensive player hits a coach, the ball is dead and the runners advance one base.

**39. BASE RUNNERS:**

1. Base runners **MUST** stay in contact with the base until the ball is hit.
2. Players must touch all bases in proper order when running.

**40. STEALING:** No stealing is permitted at any time.

**41. FAKE TAGS:** There will be no fake tags. A player who makes a fake tag shall be given one warning. A subsequent occurrence shall result in the player's ejection.

**42. PLAYER EJECTION:** Players shall be ejected from the game and receive an additional game suspension for the following conduct:

1. Forearming or tripping runners;
2. intentionally running into fielders; or
3. bad sportsmanship, such as taunting or ridiculing other players.

**43. PROTESTS AND FORFEITS:** There will be no protests or forfeits.

**44. STANDINGS:** There shall be **NO** league standings.

**45. WEEKLY EVENTS:**

1. There shall be no more than three events per week. Events are games or practices at which a coach and more than three team members are present.
2. There shall be no mandatory events on Sunday.

**46. FIELD PREPARATION:** Both Managers are responsible for the field and the bases (See Rule 1). The home team is responsible for game balls. The equipment must be put away and dugouts must be cleaned at the end of each game.

**47. MANAGERS CODE OF CONDUCT:** The Code of Conduct for Managers is a part of these rules. **ALL** Managers must be familiar with the rules contained in the Code of Conduct

## **SHETLAND NATIONAL (SPRING-LOADED MACHINE PITCH)**

In this division the environment is friendly competition, and there is no scorekeeping. Everyone plays in the field and everyone bats.

This is a step up from T-Ball. Teams practice one time per week and play one or two games per week, with one game on Saturdays. Games are 3-4 innings long. Coaches use spring-loaded pitching machines to pitch to the players instead of players hitting off of a tee. A tee is still available and used if the batter is unsuccessful hitting off the machine.

Teams are assigned based on school area requests whenever possible. Requests to play with friends must be made at sign-ups. League organizers will do their utmost to accommodate requests made on your registration form.

### **Shetland National Rules**

#### **Use Level 1 BASEBALLS Transitioning to level 5 Baseballs.**

##### **1. GAME STARTS:**

1. The Manager or a Coach **MUST** have the team roster and the medical release forms for all players at each game.
2. The home and visiting teams both are responsible for setting up the field before each game.
3. The visiting team shall have ten minutes of on-field practice beginning 25 minutes before the scheduled game time and the home team shall have ten minutes to practice starting 15 minutes before game time. No pregame batting practice on the field is permitted.
4. Teams will be limited to a maximum (13) players.

##### **2. UNIFORM:** No team shall make changes to the league issued uniforms.

##### **3. FIELD DIMENSIONS:**

1. Base lengths are to be 50 feet.
2. The spring-loaded pitching machine will be located approximately 20' from home plate.
3. An 18-20' diameter circle will be placed around the pitching mound estimated at 38' feet.

##### **4. COACHING:**

1. All managers and coaches shall be adults.
2. While at bat, a team shall have a pitching coach, a first-base coach, a third-base coach and a batting coach (to collect the balls and put them into a bucket behind home plate next to the backstop). The batting coach must remain close to the backstop or in the coaching box behind home plate.

3. A maximum of three (3) defensive coaches are allowed; other coaches must remain in the dugout. Defensive coaches should be positioned along the outfield foul lines, so as not to visually impede defensive players or base runners.
4. When the ball is put in play, the coach at the mound will often need to duck to become inconspicuous, especially on plays in the infield. Players can neither see over a tall adult, nor should they be required to throw a ball over the coach's head to the intended target.
5. The machine may throw bad pitches from time to time. It is up to the coach at the mound to call a "NO PITCH" if the coach feels the batter could not hit the ball due to a poor pitch.
6. Players are SHALL NOT pitch to other players.

**5. PLAYER EQUIPMENT**

1. Each player shall be permanently assigned a uniform number at the beginning of the season.
2. The names of the players shall **NOT** be affixed to the uniform shirt. (This is a matter of child safety to avoid strangers being able to identify a child by the name on their uniform.)
3. Catchers shall wear full protective gear.

**6. BATTING ORDER:**

1. The batting order shall contain the entire roster of players with last name and uniform number listed
2. Although all players bat each inning, team batting orders shall vary for each game. (The best and easiest way to do this throughout the season is for the batter batting first in game #1 to move to the last position in the batting order in game #2, and so on as each game is played. This will allow each player to lead off at least once during the season. Other variations are allowed.)

**7. SIDE RETIRED:**

1. After the entire roster has batted.
2. Shetland National base runners may be called out, and must return to the dugout if called out, but the batting will continue for the entire line up regardless of the number of outs.

- 8. REGULATION GAME:** Each game will be a **MAXIMUM** of one (1) hour in length. Game time shall begin from the actual start of a game and not from the scheduled start of the game. At the completion of the time limit the game shall be declared over. There is no limit to the number of innings that can be played in the hour time limit. The goal is 3 to 4 innings.

- 9. SCOREKEEPING:** There will be **NO** scorekeeping of any kind. Each team will be declared the winner of each game.

- 10. FIELDERS:** Each team will play a maximum of ten (10) players in the field, as follows:

1. The player fielding the pitcher's position shall be positioned in the 18' to 20' circle representing the mound area with at least one foot in the circle until the ball is hit.
2. No more than six (6) players shall play in the infield. Infield positions are: pitcher, catcher, first base, second base, third base and short stop.
3. Teams are limited to four (4) players in the outfield: left field, left-center field, right-center field and right field.
4. Outfielders must remain at least fifteen (15) feet behind the basepath (or on the outfield grass on most fields) until a ball is put in play.

**11. MANDATORY PLAYING TIME:**

1. **ALL** players, including manager's/coaches' children, shall rotate among all positions throughout the season.
2. Each player shall play at least one inning in the infield and one inning in the outfield per three inning game, and at least two innings in the infield and two innings in the outfield in every game of four innings or more. Managers should set lineups for each game assuming four innings will be played in order to ensure compliance with this rule.

**12. HITTING:**

1. Each batter will be allowed five (5) hittable pitches thrown by the pitching machine. (Note: The Manager/coach from the offensive team shall pitch, using the league-provided pitching machine.)
2. If the ball has not been put into play by the fifth pitch, a batting tee may be placed on home plate and the batter will be allowed to swing until the ball is put into play.
3. No balls or strikes will be called.
4. Bunting is not allowed. A batter must take a full swing.
5. A batted ball must travel a minimum of ten (10) feet in order to be a fair ball. This area will be marked with a 10 foot arc in front of home plate. (Note: home plate is in fair territory so any batted ball that hits home plate first is considered a fair ball unless it subsequently rolls untouched into foul territory prior to reaching first base or third base.)

**13. STRIKE OUT:** There are no strike outs.

**14. INFIELD FLY RULE:** The infield fly rule does **NOT** apply.

**15. THROWING THE BAT:**

1. Any player who, after one warning, throws the bat while batting shall be called out.
2. Any player who has been called out twice in one game for this offense shall lose their remaining turns at bat in that game.

**16. DEAD BALL / END OF PLAY:**

1. A play is over once the ball is in complete possession of the pitcher around the area of the pitcher's mound. The player with the ball must have general control of it for the play to be dead.
2. A player may advance until the ball is dead as described in the above paragraph but the runner is limited to taking only one extra base on an overthrow. This is to encourage fielders to make plays and throws. Guidelines for base advancements: if a player passes the halfway mark of the base path before the ball has been declared dead by its arrival in the circle around the pitcher's mound and its having been secured by the pitcher, that player is allowed to advance to the next base. If the player has not reached the halfway mark, he must go back to the previous base.
3. A batted ball that hits the pitching coach, pitching machine, ball bucket or other coach is declared dead. The batter is awarded first base and all other runners advance one (1) base.
4. If at any time during the game a throw from a defensive player hits a coach or the pitching machine, the ball is dead and the runners advance one base.

**17. BASE RUNNERS:**

1. Base runners **MUST** stay in contact with the base until the ball is hit.
2. Players must touch all bases in proper order when running.

**18. STEALING:** No stealing is permitted at any time.

**19. FAKE TAGS:** There will be no fake tags. A player who makes a fake tag shall be given a warning. A subsequent occurrence shall result in the player's ejection.

**20. PLAYER EJECTION:** Players shall be ejected from the game and receive an additional game suspension for the following conduct:

1. Forearming or tripping runners;
2. intentionally running into fielders; or
3. bad sportsmanship, such as taunting or ridiculing other players.

**21. PROTESTS AND FORFEITS:** There will be no protests or forfeits.

**22. STANDINGS:** There shall be **NO** league standings.

**23. WEEKLY EVENTS:**

1. There shall be no more than three events per week. Events are games or practices at which a coach and more than three team members are present.
2. There shall be no mandatory events on Sunday.

**24. FIELD PREPARATION:** Both Managers are responsible for the field and the bases (See Rule 1). The home team is responsible for game balls. The equipment must be put away and dugouts must be cleaned at the end of each game.

25. **MANAGERS CODE OF CONDUCT:** The Code of Conduct for Managers is a part of these rules. **ALL** Managers must be familiar with the rules contained in the Code of Conduct

## **PINTO AMERICAN (MACHINE PITCH)**

This is an exciting advancement as real baseball is played. Players continue to learn and refine basic baseball fundamentals while developing a broader knowledge of the game.

Pitching machines are used to ensure an easy to hit ball each at bat. Teams practice 1-2 times and play one weekday game and one game on Saturday per week. Games are a maximum of 6 innings long.

Managers and coaches attend a training clinic to learn basic skills and practice drills to teach the young Pinto players the basic fundamentals of baseball. **Managers at this level are required to attend and assist with upper division tryouts (approximately one hour of time is required).**

The goal of this division is to help players achieve specific objectives for throwing, catching, fielding, base running and hitting. Players at this level are expected to hustle, play their best and have FUN in a safe, learning environment.

Teamwork, respect for the volunteer coaching staff and good sportsmanship is expected from the players and parents to insure a positive environment and experience which will help each player develop baseball and life skills to the best of the player's ability.

### **Pinto American Rules**

**Level 5 baseballs are used in the Pinto machine pitch division. (No Level 1 balls.)**

#### **1. GAME STARTS:**

1. The Manager or a Coach **MUST** have the team roster and the medical release forms for all players at each game.
2. Both teams are responsible for setting up the field before each game and for preparing the field post-game.
3. The visiting team shall have ten minutes of on field practice beginning 25 minutes before the game and the home team shall have ten minutes to practice starting 15 minutes before game time. No pregame batting practice on the field is permitted.
4. Teams will be limited to eleven (11) players.

#### **2. UNIFORM:**

1. No team shall make changes to the league issued uniforms.

#### **3. FIELD DIMENSIONS:**

1. Base lengths are to be 50 feet.
2. The pitching machine will be located 38' from home plate, with pitching speeds set between 35-40 MPH.
3. An 18-20' diameter circle will be placed around the pitching machine.

#### **4. COACHING:**

1. All coaches shall be adults, including the Manager.
2. While at bat, a team shall have a pitching coach (to feed balls into the machine), a first-base coach, a third-base coach and a batting coach to collect the balls and put

them into a bucket behind home plate next to the backstop. The batting coach must remain close to the backstop or in the coaching box behind home plate.

3. A maximum of two (2) defensive coaches are allowed; other coaches must remain in the dugout. Defensive coaches should be positioned along the outfield foul lines so as not to visually impede defensive players or base runners. Defensive coaches are not allowed in the field of play (i.e., inside the foul lines).
4. One defensive coach may be positioned on each of the left field and right field foul lines. Coaches must be on the grass in foul territory and not near the 1st or 3rd base offensive coaches. Only one coach per foul line is allowed.
5. When the ball is put in play, the pitching coach will often need to duck to become inconspicuous, especially on plays in the infield. Players can neither see over a tall adult, nor should they be required to throw a ball over the coach's head to the intended target.
6. The pitching machine may at times throw bad pitches. It is up to the pitching coach to call a "NO PITCH" if the coach feels the batter could not hit the ball due to a poor pitch.
7. Players are NOT ALLOWED to operate the pitching machine in any manner.

## 5. **PLAYER EQUIPMENT**

1. Each player shall be permanently assigned a uniform number at the beginning of the season.
2. The names of the players shall **NOT** be affixed to the uniform shirt. (This is a matter of child safety to avoid strangers being able to identify a child by the name on the uniform.)
3. All players must wear a protective cup. All catchers must wear full protective gear: protective cup, shin guards, chest protector and helmet with face protector. Catchers must be in the correct position behind the plate while the ball is being pitched. No game play will take place and the game will be stopped until this rule is adhered to.

## 6. **BATTING ORDER:**

1. The batting order shall contain the entire roster of players with last name and uniform number listed.
  2. Beginning with the first game, a team's batting order shall rotate upwards for each game, that is, the batter hitting first in game #1 moves to the last position in the order in game #2, and so on as each game is played. This ensures that each player bats in a different position in the lineup throughout the season.
7. **SIDE RETIRED:** Each half inning will end after 5 runs are scored or the defensive team records three (3) outs. Strikeouts are counted at this level, but will not be enforced until a player has had at least six hittable pitches.
8. **REGULATION GAME:** Each game will be a **MAXIMUM** of one (1) hour and thirty (30) minutes in length. Game time shall begin from the actual start of a game and not from the scheduled start time. At the completion of the time limit the game shall be declared over. There is no limit to the number of innings that can be played in the hour

and (30) minute time limit. The goal is to play 5 to 6 innings.

9. **SCOREKEEPING:** There will be **NO** scorekeeping of any kind. Each team will be declared the winner of each game.
10. **FIELDERS:** Each team will play a maximum of ten (10) players in the field, as follows:
  1. The player fielding the pitcher's position shall be stationed next to the pitching machine and not directly in front of the machine, with at least one foot in the circle until the ball is hit.
  2. No more than six (6) players shall play in the infield: pitcher, catcher, first base, second base, third base and short stop.
  3. Teams are limited to four (4) players in the outfield: left field, left-center field, right-center field and right field.
  4. Outfielders must remain at least fifteen (15) feet behind the base path or on the outfield grass on most fields, until a ball is put in play.
11. **MANDATORY PLAYING TIME:**
  1. **ALL** players, including manager/coaches' children, shall rotate among all positions throughout the season, including sitting on the bench.
  2. Each player must play at least 2 innings in the infield and 2 innings in the outfield per game.
12. **HITTING:**
  1. Each batter will be allowed six (6) hittable pitches thrown by the machine.
  2. If the ball has not been put into play by the sixth pitch, a batting tee may be placed on home plate and the batter will be allowed to swing until the ball is put in play.
  3. No balls or strikes will be called.
  4. Bunting is not allowed. A batter must take a full swing.
  5. There is a minimum distance that a batted ball must travel in order to be a fair ball, this area will be marked with a 10 foot arc in front of home plate. (Remember, home plate is in fair territory so any batted ball that hits home plate first, is considered a fair ball unless it subsequently rolls untouched into foul territory prior to reaching first base or third base.)
13. **INFIELD FLY RULE:** The infield fly rule does **NOT** apply.
14. **THROWING THE BAT:**
  1. Any player who, after one warning, throws the bat while batting shall be called out.
  2. Any player who has been called out twice in one game for this offense shall lose their remaining turns at bat in that game.

**15. DEAD BALL / END OF PLAY:**

1. A play is over once the ball is in complete possession of the pitcher in the 18-20 foot circle around the pitcher's mound. The player with the ball must have control of it and have both feet in the circle to make the play dead. If the player is juggling the ball, the play is still alive.
2. A player may advance until the ball is dead as described in the above paragraph and is limited to taking only one base on an overthrow
3. Guidelines for base advancements: if a player passes the halfway mark in the base path before the ball has been declared dead that player is allowed to advance to the next base. If the player has not reached the halfway mark, he must go back to the previous base.
4. A batted ball that hits the pitching machine, generator, ball bucket or pitching coach is declared dead. The batter is awarded first base and all other runners advance one (1) base.
5. If at any time during the game a throw from a defensive player hits the pitching machine, the ball is dead and the runners advance one base.

**16. BASE RUNNERS:**

1. Base runners **MUST** stay in contact with the base until the ball is hit.
2. Players must touch all bases in proper order when running.

**17. STEALING:** No stealing is permitted at any time. No leadoffs.

**18. FAKE TAGS:** There will be no fake tags. A player who makes a fake tag shall be given one warning. A subsequent occurrence shall result in the player's ejection.

**19. PLAYER EJECTION:** Players shall be ejected from the game and receive an additional game suspension for the following conduct:

1. Forearming or tripping runners;
2. intentionally running into fielders; or
3. bad sportsmanship, such as taunting or ridiculing other players.

**20. PROTESTS AND FORFEITS:** There will be no protests or forfeits.

**21. STANDINGS:** There shall be **NO** league standings.

**22. WEEKLY EVENTS:**

1. There shall be no more than three events per week. Events are games or practices at which a coach and more than three team members are present.
2. There shall be no mandatory events on Sunday.

**23. MANAGERS CODE OF CONDUCT:** The Code of Conduct for Managers is a part of these rules. **ALL** Managers must be familiar with the rules contained in the Code of Conduct.

## **PINTO NATIONAL (KID PITCH)**

This is the first year that tryouts are held and kids are drafted onto teams. This is the first division where kids pitch to each other and where scores and standings are kept.

Kid Pitch is for more experienced players who are ready to learn to pitch and to hit pitched balls. All players wishing to play Kid Pitch must tryout. While the league is primarily for 8 year olds, some 7 year olds may try out if, in the judgment of the league and coaches, they are more advanced and ready to pitch. Pitching distance is 38 feet.

### **Pinto National Rules**

The following Rules are in addition to the basic baseball rules as contained in the Pony League Rulebook **AND** the **PONY** Pinto Division Rulebook. In the event of a conflict, **THESE** Rules control:

1. **GAME STARTS:**
  1. The Manager or a Coach **MUST** have the team roster and the medical release forms for all players at each game.
  2. The home team is responsible for setting up the field and supplying two (2) useable balls for each game.
  3. The visiting team shall have ten minutes of on-field practice beginning 25 minutes before the game and the home team shall have ten minutes practice starting 15 minutes before game time. No pregame batting practice on the field is permitted.
  4. Teams will be limited to (11) players.
2. **UNIFORM:**
  1. No team shall make substantial changes to the league issued uniforms.
3. **EQUIPMENT:**
  1. All players will use proper equipment, including: cups, cleats (Plastic or rubber are okay; **NO METAL OR SPIKED CLEATS**; No tennis shoes), uniforms, gloves and full catchers gear.
  2. Batters and base runners must wear their helmets at all times on the field during play.
  3. No players will be allowed on the field without the appropriate equipment
4. **FIELD DIMENSIONS:** Base distances are 60 feet. The pitching mound shall be 38 feet from home plate.
5. **COACHING:**
  1. All coaches shall be adults, over 18, including the Manager.
  2. The offensive team shall have three coaches: one coach at 1st base; one coach at 3rd base; and one coach in the dugout. Only the manager and up to two coaches are permitted in the dugout. No other parent shall view the game from or be present in the dugout during the game. Parents are spectators and should watch

the game from the stands or a location other than the dugout.

**6. BATTING ORDER:**

1. The batting order shall contain the entire roster of players. Every player listed in the order will bat.
2. Teams will bat through their entire line-up regardless of any defensive player's turn to sit out during an inning.
3. A legal lineup is no less than eight (8) players ready and able to play at the start of the game. A team may begin and continue to play with eight (8) players without forfeiting the game but must take an out at **EACH** and every at bat for the 9th batter's spot in the lineup. (Example: if two runners are on base and the eighth batter makes the second out of the inning, the inning then ends because the ninth spot in the lineup represents the third out). **A TEAM MUST HAVE AT LEAST EIGHT (8) PLAYERS AVAILABLE AT ALL TIMES DURING A GAME TO AVOID A FORFEIT. A TEAM THAT STARTS A GAME WITH EIGHT PLAYERS BUT LOSES ONE DURING THE GAME TO INJURY OR ANY OTHER CAUSE FORFEITS THE GAME. A TEAM WITHOUT AT LEAST EIGHT PLAYERS AVAILABLE AT THE ANNOUNCED START OF THE GAME FORFEITS EVEN IF A PLAYER SHOWS UP LATE CAUSING THE ROSTER TO INCREASE TO EIGHT PLAYERS.**
4. If a player leaves during the game or is injured resulting in the team having eight (8) players, then the team must take an out at that player's spot in the lineup for the **NEXT** at bat only. **If a player shows up late to a game (after the official line up has been exchanged) he is eligible to enter the lineup and must do so as the last batter. At no time is the player ineligible to enter the game.**
5. A player may not bat in the last position in the batting order in consecutive games.

**7. SIDE RETIRED/END HALF INNING:** Three outs or 5 runs, whichever occurs first.

**8. REGULATION GAME:**

1. Each game will be six (6) innings, unless extended by extra innings, subject to the time restriction set forth in Rule 8(2), or shortened as a result of Rule 8(5).
2. There is no outside time limit on a game, but no new innings will start after one hour and forty-five minutes (1:45).
3. Game time begins from the actual start of a game and not from the scheduled start time.
4. **RUNS PER INNING LIMITS:** A maximum of five (5) runs per each half inning of play may be scored by any team at bat through the conclusion of the fifth inning or any inning prior to the umpire announcing or declaring the "last inning." It shall be the responsibility of the umpire to declare and advise managers of the "last inning" if, in the umpire's sole discretion and judgment, a sixth inning will not be played. Even if an additional inning could have been played after the declaration by the umpire of the "last inning," the umpire's decision and judgment is final and shall stand.
5. There is a 10 run mercy rule in effect after the losing team has had a minimum of four turns at bat. This means if the visiting team trails by 10 runs at the

conclusion of three innings, it must score at least one run in its next at bat or the game is over.

6. In the event of a tie after 6 innings, additional innings will be played until a winner is declared, unless the 'No new inning' rule comes into play, in which case the game result will be recorded as a tie. Tied games will NOT be completed at a later date.

9. **SCOREKEEPING:**

1. The home team is required to provide a scorekeeper who will score the game in NBBA supplied scorebook. The home scorekeeper will be the 'official scorekeeper' for the game. The home team also is responsible for operating the scoreboard.

10. **FIELDERS:** Each team will play a maximum of ten (10) players in the field, as follows: pitcher, catcher, 1st Base, 2nd Base, shortstop, 3rd Base and four (4) outfielders.

11. **MANDATORY PLAYING TIME:**

1. **NO** player shall sit on the bench more than one (1) inning per game.
2. **ALL** players, including manager/coaches' children, shall rotate through all positions during the season, including sitting on the bench.\* All players must play a minimum of two (2) innings in the infield in each game, subject to the following: each player shall play at least one inning in the infield and one inning in the outfield per three inning game and at least two innings in the infield and two innings in the outfield in every game of four innings or more. Managers should set lineups for each game assuming only four innings will be played in order to ensure compliance with this rule. **\*NOTE: This is a player development rule. It is the manager's responsibility throughout the season to ensure that all players are given an opportunity to play all positions. While no child should be forced to play a position if the child refuses to play it or if there are legitimate safety concerns, every effort should be made by the manager to encourage each player to at least try the positions and this effort by the manager should continue throughout the season even in the face of some player resistance.**
3. Any player not starting a game must start in the next scheduled game. (The only allowable exceptions are for injury, illness or discipline.)

12. **HITTING:** Bunting is permitted.

13. **STRIKE OUT/WALKS:**

1. Strike outs are permitted.
2. In order to encourage hitting and swinging at pitches, the strike zone will be enlarged during the beginning of the season from one ball outside of home plate to one ball inside of home plate, and from the shoulders to the knees.
3. The strike zone will condense to a more traditional strike zone as the season progresses.
4. Players shall be allowed to walk.

5. Walked in runs are allowed and count as a run.
14. **HIT BY PITCH:**
  1. If the batter is hit by a pitched ball, the batter shall be awarded first base.
  2. If a single pitcher hits three (3) batters during a game the pitcher must be removed from the mound.
15. **HIT BY A BATTED BALL:** If base runner is hit by a batted ball, the base runner will be called OUT, all other advancing base runners will continue to the nearest base and the play called dead.
16. **INFIELD FLY RULE:** The infield fly rule does **NOT** apply.
17. **THROWING THE BAT:** Any player who, after one warning, throws the bat while batting shall be called out. Any player who has been called out twice in one game for this offense shall lose their remaining turns at bat in that game.
18. **BASE RUNNERS:**
  1. There shall be **NO** leadoffs prior to the pitch crossing home plate. Base runners **MUST** stay in contact with the base until the pitched ball crosses home plate.
  2. Players must touch all bases in order when running and not pass another base runner while doing so. Failure to touch a base or passing another base runner will result in an out.
19. **STEALING:**
  1. Stealing is permitted on a passed ball or wild pitch that the catcher does NOT BLOCK and keep in front of him. Bases may be stolen on the third strike recorded against a batter that the catcher does not block; however, the batter is out. (While what is a passed ball may be open to some interpretation, the goal of this rule is to teach catchers to block balls in the dirt or keep errant pitches in general from going to backstop). Only one (1) base may be stolen on a wild pitch or passed ball. This rule applies even if the ball thrown by the catcher in an attempt to make a play on the runner is overthrown or reaches the outfield.
  2. If it is clear that a base runner has left a base before the ball crosses the plate, the base runner shall be returned to the previous base and warned of the rule. If the infraction continues, the base runner shall be declared OUT. [Note: it is not the intent of the NBBA that this rule be applied punitively, but rather only in cases where the infraction is obvious].
  3. There will be no stealing home under any circumstances. A player may be advanced from third only on a batted ball or walk.
20. **OUT OF PLAY:** Only one base will be allowed on an overthrow that leaves the playing area. Out of play is 10-15 feet beyond the first and third baselines.
21. **FAKE TAGS:** There will be no fake tags. A player who makes a fake tag shall be given

one warning. A subsequent occurrence shall result in the player's ejection.

22. **PLAYER EJECTION:** Players shall be ejected from the game and receive an additional game suspension for the following conduct:

1. forearming or tripping runners;
2. intentionally running into fielders; or
3. bad sportsmanship, such as taunting or ridiculing other players.

23. **PROTESTS AND FORFEITS:** No post-game protests shall be allowed. Any issues or concerns over interpretation of these rules shall be determined in game and first shall be directed to the umpire. If resolution cannot be obtained through the umpire, the Division Coordinator shall be consulted. If the Division Coordinator cannot resolve the issue or is unavailable, then the issue shall be directed to the Rules Chairman. If the Rules Chairman cannot resolve the issue or is unavailable, then the league president shall be consulted. In no case will the time of any game be extended in order to deal with a question of interpretation of these rules. Game results are final. Forfeits are as described in these rules.

24. **UMPIRES:**

1. NBBA will provide Junior Umpires to call the games as the league budget permits.
2. The appointed umpire shall be positioned behind the pitcher and will call balls and strikes as well as defensive plays in the field.
3. There will be **no** arguing or disputing any calls made by the umpire (especially the Junior Umpires).
4. In the event Junior Umpires are unavailable, the home team shall be responsible for designating an umpire.

25. **PITCHING**

1. Kid pitch only. *No coach is allowed to pitch.*
2. No player shall be permitted to pitch more than six (6) outs per game, regardless of pitch count eligibility. Once removed from the mound, a player may not return to pitch again in a single game.
3. No balks will be called.
4. Dropped third strike is a dead ball as to the batter and the batter is out.
5. If a pitcher hits three (3) batters within a game the pitcher must be removed.

**NBBA has adopted the following for pitch counts as it pertains to days of rest:**

If a player pitches 66 or more pitches in a day, four (4) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches 51 - 65 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches 36 - 50 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches 21 - 35 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest must be

observed.

If a player pitches 1 - 20 pitches in a day, no calendar day of rest is required.

A pitcher may finish pitching to a given batter before going into next calendar day rest threshold. By way of example, if the pitcher starts the batter with 33 pitches and finishes that same batter with 38 pitches, then his threshold reverts back to 35 pitches and the player would be required to observe 1 calendar day of rest.

**MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PITCHES FOR ALL PLAYERS IS 50 UNTIL APRIL 1.**

**Maximum number of pitches by age group (Apr 1 and after):**

7 and 8 yr olds – 50 pitch max – may finish batter

9 yr olds – 55 pitch max– may finish batter

10 yr olds – 65 pitch max– may finish batter

11 yr olds – 75 pitch max– may finish batter

12 yr old and older – 85 pitch max– may finish batter

**Pitcher to catcher ban: any pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game may not then play catcher for the remainder of the day. This is a hard stop. The pitcher reaching the 40<sup>th</sup> pitch who wishes to catch cannot finish the batter in this circumstance.**

**Any catcher who catches into his 4<sup>th</sup> inning will not be permitted to pitch. For purposes of this rule the catcher has started to catch into a fourth inning when the first pitch of the inning is delivered.**

**Once removed from the pitching position, a player cannot re-enter the game at the pitching position.**

**26. WEEKLY EVENTS**

1. There shall be no more than three (3) mandatory events per week. Events are games or practices at which a coach and more than three team members are present.
2. Rule 26(1) will not apply during the playoffs. During the playoffs, it is possible that more than three (3) events in a week may occur, based on playoff and game scheduling.
3. There will be **NO** mandatory events on Sunday.

**27. MANAGERS CODE OF CONDUCT:** The Code of Conduct for Managers is a part of these rules. For **ALL** player ejections, please see Bronco and Pony division rules as a guideline.

28. **RAINOUTS** – Rainouts will not be rescheduled at this level
29. **PLAYOFFS** – The higher seed gets choice of home or visitor for first game only. Thereafter, a coin toss determines home or visitor.

**REGULATION GAME DURING PLAYOFFS:** Each game shall be six (6) innings in duration. No time limits. There is a 10 run mercy rule in effect after the losing team has had a minimum of 4 at bats. In the event of a tie after 6 innings, additional innings will be played until a winner is determined. The higher seed gets choice of home or visitor for first game only. Thereafter, a coin toss will determine home or visitor.

30. **PONY - NBBA BAT RULES:**

31. 2-5/8” barrel bats and 2-1/4” bats are LEGAL. If a 2-5/8” bat is a -3, it must be BBCOR certified. All other minus factor bats, whether 2-5/8” or 2-1/4” barrel, (-5,-7,-9, etc.), must be YBBCOR certified with the USABat licensing stamp on the bat in order to be used for league and all-star play. **All bats without the USABat stamp are illegal and not eligible for use during league play.**
32. 2-3/4” barrel bats are ILLEGAL
33. Wood bats are LEGAL with a barrel no larger than 2-5/8”

IF A LARGER BAT IS USED or deemed ILLEGAL, **IT IS AN AUTOMATIC OUT.**

34. **FREE AGENCY PLAYER POOL** – NBBA seeks to ensure that scheduled games go forward and that forfeitures, such as those occasioned by a lack of available players, are minimized. Additionally, NBBA seeks to provide opportunities for players to experience higher levels of competition where appropriate, for example, in a division with older players. Accordingly, each team is permitted to designate up to three (3) players from the immediately lower division to be called upon for the purpose of filling a vacancy on a team roster for a given game (the “Free Agency Pool Players”). Managers are required to identify their pool of Free Agency Pool Players to their Division Coordinators at least two (2) days prior to the first pitch of the first game of the season. To the extent Free Agency Pool Players will be playing in leagues with older players, a parent or legal guardian of a Free Agency Pool Player must, prior to submission by any Manager of his/her designated pool, execute a Special Consent to permit participation by the player in the Free Agency Pool, whereby the parent or guardian acknowledges the increased risks and hazards of playing with older players, and waives any and all claims arising from same. Managers shall present all Special Consents to Division Coordinators prior to the first game, and Division Coordinators shall forward the Special Consents to the acting NBBA Secretary. No manager may alternate or change his/her Free Agency Pool without notice to the Division Coordinator. Further, the Division Coordinator shall not accept any such changes in or to a team’s Free Agency Pool without first receiving the associated Special Consent(s). **Only one Free Agency Pool Player can be called upon to play in any particular game and must be present or approved for play by the start of the game. A Pool Player may not enter the game once it has begun unless**

**the Pool Player was present at the announced start of the game or approved by the Division Coordinator prior to the start of the game.** Free Agency Pool Players may not participate in playoff games. In addition, there will be no conflict with a Free Agency Pool Player's permanent team. Free Agency Pool Players may not pitch or catch. The Division Coordinator must approve the use and eligibility of a Free Agency Pool Player.

## MUSTANG

At this age we introduce leading off and stealing. Games are played with 60-foot base paths and a 46-foot pitching distance.

The following Rules are in addition to the basic baseball rules as contained in the MLB rule book and the Pony League rule book. In the event of a conflict, **THESE** Rules supersede:

### 1. GAME STARTS:

1. The Manager or a Coach **MUST** have the team roster and the medical release forms for all players at each game.
2. The home team is responsible for setting up the field before each game and supplying three (3) new approved baseballs.
3. The visiting team shall have ten minutes of on-field practice beginning 25 minutes before the scheduled game time and the home team shall have ten minutes of on-field practice starting 15 minutes before game time. No batting practice on the field is permitted.
4. Teams will be limited to eleven (11) players.

### 2. UNIFORM:

1. Each player shall be permanently assigned a uniform number at the beginning of the season. A player's name may appear on the back of the jersey.
2. No team shall make changes to the league issued uniforms without approval of the Division Coordinator. Player purchased pants should match the team's official colors or scheme as directed by the team's manager or by the Division Coordinator.

3. **COACHES IN THE DUGOUT** - Only the manager and up to two coaches are permitted in the dugout. No other parent shall view the game from or be present in the dugout during the game. Parents are spectators and should watch the game from the stands or a location other than the dugout.

### 4. BATTING ORDER:

1. The batting order shall include all players on the team's roster present at the commencement of the game. Every player listed in the order will bat. No player shall occupy the last batting position in consecutive games.
2. A legal lineup is no less than eight (8) players ready and able to play at the actual start of each game. A team may begin and continue to play with eight (8) players without forfeiting the game but must take an out at EACH and every at bat for the 9th batter's spot in the lineup. (Example: if two runners are on base and the eighth batter makes the second out of the inning, the inning then ends because the ninth spot in the lineup represents the third out). A TEAM MUST HAVE AT LEAST EIGHT (8) PLAYERS AVAILABLE AT ALL TIMES DURING A

GAME TO AVOID A FORFEIT. A TEAM THAT STARTS A GAME WITH EIGHT PLAYERS BUT LOSES ONE DURING THE GAME TO INJURY OR ANY OTHER CAUSE FORFEITS THE GAME. A TEAM WITHOUT AT LEAST EIGHT PLAYERS AVAILABLE AT THE ANNOUNCED START OF THE GAME FORFEITS EVEN IF A PLAYER SHOWS UP LATE CAUSING THE ROSTER TO INCREASE TO EIGHT PLAYERS.

3. If a player leaves during the game or is injured resulting in the team having eight (8) players then the team must take an out at that player's spot in the lineup for the NEXT at bat only. **If a player shows up late to a game (after the official line up has been exchanged) he may enter the line-up and must do so as the last batter. At no time is the player ineligible to enter the game.**
  
5. **REGULATION GAME:** Each game shall be a maximum of six (6) innings in duration, unless extra innings are necessary. No new inning may be started after one hour and fifty-five minutes (1:55) from the actual starting time of the game. There is a 10 run mercy rule in effect after the losing team has had a minimum of four turns at bat. (This means if the visiting team trails by 10 runs at the conclusion of three innings, it must score at least one run in its next at bat or the game is over.) In the event of a tie after 6 innings, additional innings will be played until a winner is declared, unless the 'No new inning' rule comes into play, in which case the game result will be recorded as a tie. Tied games will NOT be completed at a later date.
  
6. **RUNS PER INNING LIMITS:** A maximum of five (5) runs per each half inning of play may be scored by any team at bat through the conclusion of the fifth inning or any inning prior to the umpire announcing or declaring the "last inning." **It shall be the responsibility of the umpire to declare and advise managers of the "last inning"** if, in the umpire's sole discretion and judgment, a sixth inning will not be able to be played. Even if an additional inning could have been played after the declaration by the umpire of the "last inning," the umpire's decision and judgment is final and shall stand.
  
7. **MANDATORY PLAYING TIME:**
  1. Each player must play a minimum of four innings on defense. **NO PLAYER SHALL SIT ON THE BENCH FOR CONSECUTIVE INNINGS.**
  2. There will be free substitutions defensively, with the exception of the pitcher. Once a player has been removed from the mound as a pitcher, the player may not return to pitch again, regardless of the number of pitches thrown.
  3. Each and every player **MUST** play one (1) inning in the infield each game during the entire season and in NBBA tournament play, regardless of how many innings are played.
  4. No player may sit as a starting defensive player in consecutive games. Any player who does not start a game on defense, **WILL** be in a starting defensive position in the next, most immediate game that the player attends. (Example: A player is benched to start a game and misses the team's next scheduled game. The player **MUST** be in the starting lineup on defense when he returns; i.e., a

manager is NOT excused from complying with this rule even if the player would have started the next scheduled game if that game is missed by the player.

5. Development of complete players being a primary focus and function of this division, every manager is expected to draft at least one eight or nine year old (preferably no less than two) player(s) and develop that player/those players as pitchers. In order to ensure the development of young pitchers and ensure that managers are meeting the goals of player development for this division, in **each** game that is played, a first year 9 or 8 year old or a combination of multiple first year 9 or 8 year olds **MUST** start and complete pitching one complete inning, defined as 3 outs or 5 runs (unless they must be pulled due to reaching a pitch count limit) in a single game inning. That is, three outs or five runs may not be recorded over the course of more than one inning. Leeway will be given for an 8 or 9 year old who enters the game and takes the mound as long as there are no outs, no runs have scored and there is a 0-0 count on the batter. That is, no 8 or 9 year old may be brought in to face a batter in the middle of an at bat. This is to discourage managers from bringing in a pitcher to face a batter with an 0-2 count, make one pitch and record an out. **While some discretion is given to managers here, it should be understood that best and preferred practice is to have an 8 or 9 year old start and finish an inning. Having pitchers inherit baserunners is not recommended.** THE FAILURE OF A MANAGER TO PITCH AN 8 OR 9 YEAR OLD IN A GAME WILL RESULT IN A FORFEIT OF THAT GAME EVEN IF THE TEAM WINS AND REGARDLESS OF SCORE. NO EXCEPTIONS. (e.g., a mercy rule win will be forfeited if obtained without compliance with this rule; a game in which no 9 year old pitches will be forfeited regardless of reason for 9 year old absence).
6. A Pitcher removed from the mound CANNOT re-enter to pitch in the same game.

8. **THROWING THE BAT:** Any player who, after one warning, throws the bat while batting *may* be ejected from the game.

9. **STEALING 1st Half of the Season:**

1. Stealing of 2nd or 3rd base is allowed. The runner is locked at 3rd base. Base runners may not steal or advance home on an attempt by the catcher to throw the runner out at 3rd base or any other base or on a steal or a pickoff attempt at any base.
2. A runner may not score from third unless there is an offensive play (batted ball, or forced in by walk or hit by pitch).
3. Lead-offs and stealing from first and second base will begin at the start of the season.
4. There are NO lead-offs at third base. The runner must stay in contact with the third base bag until pitcher releases the ball, and the runner may not break for home unless the ball is put in play.
5. No trick or decoy plays are allowed.

6. A player occupying third base who repeatedly fails to maintain contact with the bag after being warned by the umpire may be called out.
10. **STEALING 2nd Half of the Season (Discretion to designate when the 2<sup>nd</sup> half begins rests with Division Coordinator. Umpires should be notified by DC and managers):**
    1. Stealing of 2nd, 3rd and home is allowed. The runner is NOT locked at 3rd base. Runners can steal home or advance to home on an attempt by the catcher to throw the runner out at 3rd base or any other base or on a steal or pickoff attempt at any base.
    2. A runner can score from third on a non-offensive play (passed ball, wild pitch, throwing error, etc.)
    3. Lead-offs from all bases are permitted in the 2nd half of the season.
  11. **PLAYER EJECTION:** Any player who is ejected from a game for game play will be subject to a review of the play by the Division Coordinator who may issue an additional suspension. If a player is ejected from a game twice during a single season, that player shall be suspended from the team's next one (1) to three (3) games (including practices) upon review and ruling of the NBBA President and Division Coordinator. If a player is ejected for three times in the same season, that player is subject to suspension for the remainder of the season upon review and ruling of the NBBA Board.
  11. **RAINOUTS** – Rainouts will not be rescheduled at this level
  12. **PONY - NBBA BAT RULES:**
    1. 2-5/8” barrel bats and 2-1/4” bats are LEGAL. If a 2-5/8” bat is a -3, it must be BBCOR certified. All other minus factor bats, whether 2-5/8” or 2-1/4” barrel, (-5,-7,-9, etc.), must be YBBCOR certified with the USABat licensing stamp on the bat in order to be used for league and all-star play. All bats without the USABat stamp are illegal and not eligible for use during league play.
    2. 2-3/4” barrel bats are ILLEGAL
    3. Wood bats are LEGAL with a barrel no larger than 2-5/8”

IF A LARGER BAT IS USED or deemed ILLEGAL, **IT IS AN AUTOMATIC OUT.**

**13. PITCHING RESTRICTIONS:**

**NBBA has adopted the following for pitch counts as it pertains to days rest:**

If a player pitches 66 or more pitches in a day, four (4) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches 51 -65 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches 36 - 50 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches 21 - 35 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches 1 - 20 pitches in a day, no calendar day of rest is required.

A pitcher may finish pitching to a given batter before going into next calendar day rest threshold. By way of example, if the pitcher starts the batter with 33 pitches and finishes that same batter with 38 pitches, then his threshold reverts back to 35 pitches and the player would be required to observe 1 calendar day of rest.

**MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PITCHES FOR ALL PLAYERS IS 50 UNTIL APRIL 1.**

Maximum number of pitches by age group (April 1 and after):

- 8 yr olds – 50 pitch max – may finish batter
- 9 yr olds – 55 pitch max– may finish batter
- 10 yr olds – 65 pitch max– may finish batter
- 11 yr olds – 75 pitch max– may finish batter
- 12 yr old and over – 85 pitch max– may finish batter

**Pitcher to catcher ban: any pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game may not then play catcher for the remainder of the day. This is a hard stop. The pitcher reaching the 40<sup>th</sup> pitch who wishes to catch cannot finish the batter in this circumstance.**

**Any catcher who catches into his 4<sup>th</sup> inning will not be permitted to pitch. For purposes of this rule the catcher has started to catch into a fourth inning when the first pitch of the inning is delivered.**

**Once removed from the pitching position, a player cannot re-enter the game at the pitching position.**

14. **DROPPED THIRD STRIKE 1st Half of the Season:** The dropped third strike rule shall **NOT** apply. The batter is out and may not attempt to advance to first base if it is unoccupied.
15. **DROPPED THIRD STRIKE 2nd Half of the Season (Discretion to designate when 2<sup>nd</sup> half begins rests with Division Coordinator. Umpire should be notified by DCs and managers.):** The dropped third strike rule is in effect, with the exception of the last out of an inning. If there are 2 outs and a player strikes out and there is a dropped 3rd strike, the batter is automatically out. The dropped third strike rule applies only if first base is **unoccupied** or open with less than two out. A player on first base leading off or attempting to steal is still considered to be occupying first base

16. **BALKS** – There are no balks in Mustang. It is a teachable moment for the kids. However, in no instance will a runner be penalized by being picked off or thrown out stealing if a pitcher has “balked.” If a “balk” is called, the runner is safe.
17. **INTENTIONAL WALKS - There are no intentional walks in Mustang.** All batters must be pitched to. [Note: pitching to a batter carefully is distinct from intentionally walking a player]
18. **MUST AVOID RULE:** While recognizing that not all incidental contact can be entirely eliminated, there shall be no collisions between base runners and defensive players. In all cases, without exception, the runner shall avoid a collision.
- If the runner makes more than incidental contact with a defensive player, the runner shall be declared out.
  - If, in the judgment of the umpire, any contact was more than incidental and unintentional, the runner shall be ejected from the game.
  - Should the umpire determine, in his or her judgment, that the runner had an intent to injure, in addition to the ejection and an automatic one game suspension that accompanies such an ejection, the player shall remain suspended pending an incident review and determination of the conduct by the Board of Directors.
  - If a runner slides or runs past a base to avoid a collision because the defensive player is blocking access to the base without possession of the ball or without the ball directly en route to the defensive player, then the runner shall be declared “safe” and awarded the base. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the runner would have attained an additional base safely, the umpire may award the runner one additional base.
19. **WEEKLY EVENTS:** There shall be no more than four (4) events per week. Events are games or practices at which a coach and more than three (3) team members are present.
20. **MANAGERS CODE OF CONDUCT:** The Code of Conduct for Managers is a part of these rules. **ALL** managers and coaches must be familiar with the rules contained in the Code of Conduct.
21. **PROTESTS AND FORFEITS:** No post-game protests shall be allowed. Any issues or concerns over interpretation of these rules shall be determined in game and first shall be directed to the umpire. If resolution cannot be obtained through the umpire, the Division Coordinator shall be consulted. If the Division Coordinator cannot resolve the issue or is unavailable, then the issue shall be directed to the Rules Chairman. If the Rules Chairman cannot resolve the issue or is unavailable, then the league president shall be consulted. In no case will the time of any game be extended in order to deal with a question of interpretation of these rules. Game results are final. Forfeits are as described in these rules.

## 22. ADDITIONAL PLAYOFF RULE PERTAINING TO LENGTH OF GAMES:

**REGULATION GAME:** Each game shall be six (6) innings in duration. No time limits. There is a 10 run mercy rule in effect after the losing team has had a minimum of 4 at bats. In the event of a tie after 6 innings, additional innings will be played until a winner is determined. Any game which cannot be completed due to darkness/weather will resume (most likely the following day) with the same score, conditions, etc. This means that no pitcher previously removed from the mound can re-enter the game as pitcher. Teams must use the same batting order and the same number of players. A player who was present and in the lineup at the start of the game on the previous day who is absent on the day the suspended game is continued may be withdrawn from the lineup, but if the player's absence causes the player's team to have less than 9 eligible players, it will be treated like an injured player and the team will take an out only for the missing player's next turn at bat. Both managers shall be responsible for agreeing on the conditions existing at the time a game is suspended and documenting the conditions and advising the Division Coordinator as soon as possible following the suspension of the game. The higher seed gets choice of home or visitor for the first playoff game only. Thereafter, a coin toss will determine home or visitor.

23. **FREE AGENCY PLAYER POOL** – NBBA seeks to ensure that scheduled games go forward and that forfeitures, such as those occasioned by a lack of available players, are minimized. Additionally, NBBA seeks to provide opportunities for players to experience higher levels of competition where appropriate, for example, in a division with older players. Accordingly, teams are permitted to designate up to three (3) players from the immediately lower division to be called upon for the purpose of filling a vacancy on a team roster for a given game (the “Free Agency Pool Players”). Managers are required to identify their pool of Free Agency Pool Players to their Division Coordinators at least two (2) days prior to the first pitch of the first game of the season. To the extent Free Agency Pool Players will be playing in leagues with older players, a parent or legal guardian of a Free Agency Pool Player must, prior to submission by any Manager of his/her designated pool, execute a Special Consent to permit participation by the player in the Free Agency Pool, whereby the parent or guardian will acknowledge the increased risks and hazards of playing with older players, and waives any and all claims arising from same. Managers shall present all Special Consents to Division Coordinators prior to the first game, and Division Coordinators shall forward the Special Consents to the acting NBBA Secretary. No manager may alter or change his/her Free Agency Pool without notice to the Division Coordinator. Further, the Division Coordinator shall not accept any such changes in or to a team's Free Agency Pool without first receiving the associated Special Consent(s). **Up to three Free Agency Pool Players may be called upon to play in any particular game, but each pool player must be present or approved for play by the start of the game. A Pool Player may not enter the game once it has begun unless the Pool Player was present at the announced start of the game or approved by the Division Coordinator prior to the start of the game.** Free Agency Pool Players may not

participate in playoff games. In addition, there will be no conflict with a Free Agency Pool Player's permanent team. Free Agency Pool Players may not pitch or catch. The Division Coordinator must approve the use and eligibility of a Free Agency Pool Player. Free Agency Pool Players are available to allow teams to field a complete nine player lineup and to avoid forfeits. Pool Players shall NOT be used to the exclusion of normally rostered players or to reduce their playing time. Violations of this rule will result in managerial suspension which may include multiple games.

## **BRONCO DIVISION**

In this division, the size of the diamond is once again increased. Broncos move up to 70-foot base paths with a 50-foot pitching distance. Eleven and 12 year olds play Bronco. Certain 10 year olds are permitted to play in this division

The following Rules are in addition to the basic MLB baseball rules and as contained in the Pony League Rulebook. In the event of a conflict, **THESE** Rules supersede:

### **1. GAME STARTS:**

1. The Manager or a Coach **MUST** have the team roster and the medical release forms for all players at each game.
2. The home team is responsible for supplying four (4) new approved baseballs for each game.
3. The visiting team shall have ten minutes of on field practice beginning 25 minutes before the scheduled game time and the home team shall be allotted ten (10) minutes of on field practice starting 15 minutes before the scheduled game time.
4. **NO** on field batting practice permitted.

### **2. FIELD PREP**

1. The home team is responsible for dragging the infield areas and watering the field after each game.

### **3. UNIFORM:**

1. Each player shall be permanently assigned a uniform number at the beginning of the season. Players' names may be affixed to the back of the jersey.
2. No team shall make changes to the league issued uniforms. Unauthorized changes will result in discipline of the manager and the team may be penalized. Player purchased pants should match the team's official colors as directed by the manager or Division Coordinators. A player may buy and wear his own fitted cap as long as it has the same color and logo as the league issued cap.

3. Metal cleats **are** permitted in the Bronco division.

4. **BATTING ORDER:**

1. The batting order shall include all players on the team's roster present at the commencement of the game. Every player listed in the order will bat.
2. A legal lineup is no less than eight (8) players ready and able to play at the actual start of each game. A team may begin and continue to play with eight (8) players without forfeiting the game but must take an out at EACH and every at bat for the 9th batter's spot in the lineup. (Example: if two runners are on base and the eighth batter makes the second out of the inning, the inning then ends because the ninth spot in the lineup represents the third out). **A TEAM MUST HAVE AT LEAST EIGHT (8) PLAYERS AVAILABLE AT ALL TIMES DURING A GAME TO AVOID A FORFEIT. A TEAM THAT STARTS A GAME WITH EIGHT PLAYERS BUT LOSES ONE DURING THE GAME TO INJURY OR ANY OTHER CAUSE FORFEITS THE GAME. A TEAM WITHOUT AT LEAST EIGHT PLAYERS AVAILABLE AT THE START OF THE GAME FORFEITS EVEN IF A PLAYER SHOWS UP LATE CAUSING THE ROSTER TO INCREASE TO EIGHT PLAYERS.**
3. If a player leaves during the game or gets injured resulting in the team having eight (8) players then the team must take an out at that player's spot in the lineup for the NEXT at bat only. If a player shows up late to a game (after the official line up has been exchanged) he may enter the lineup and must do so as the last batter. At no time is the player ineligible to enter the game.
4. **A player must not bat last in the batting order in consecutive games. (Note: This means that a player set to bat second to last must be moved to a higher position in the batting order if the player scheduled to bat last fails to appear for a game and the player who was to have bat second to last was the last batter in the game immediately prior.)**

5. **REGULAR SEASON TIME LIMITATIONS (TIME RULES):**

1. Each game shall be a maximum of seven (7) innings in duration, unless the game is tied, in which case the game will continue until a winner is decided, subject to time and darkness restrictions.
2. There is a 10-run mercy rule. If a team is up by 10 or more runs after the losing team has had five (5) turns at bat then the game shall end
3. No new inning may be started after two hours and fifteen minutes (2:15) from the **actual starting time of the game**. There is no "drop dead" rule for time. All innings that are started must be completed. At the beginning of each game, the managers and the umpire should agree upon the time at which the game commences. Where there is any question or dispute as to the official start time, the umpire's ruling governs. The two hour and fifteen minute (2:15) limitation period shall not include game delays (as determined by the umpire). If a game is stopped due to rain and lighting, it is a suspended game.

4. A game tied after two hours and fifteen minutes (2:15) or which cannot continue due to darkness shall be treated as and shall end in a tie.
5. An official game is defined in the National Pony League Rules. No game shall end until the losing team has had five turns at bat. Games stopped due to rain and/or darkness are suspended games. When suspended games are resumed, all players on the rosters from that game may be used, but pitchers previously removed from the mound in the game may not re-enter as a pitcher in the resumed game. Players not present when the suspended game was stopped but in attendance when it is resumed must bat after all players previously present in the suspended game have batted once in the resumed game.
6. Postponed and suspended games must resume as soon as the schedule permits.
7. The game schedule is subject to change and may be altered by the Bronco Division Coordinator and/or the League President for rain-outs, suspensions, other makeups, etc. as he, she or they determine(s).

#### 6. **MANDATORY PLAYING TIME:**

1. Each player must play a **MINIMUM** of three (3) innings on defense.
2. There will be free substitutions defensively, with the exception of the pitcher. Once a player has been removed from the mound as a pitcher, the player may not return to pitch again, regardless of the number of pitches thrown.
3. **NO PLAYER WILL SIT ON THE BENCH IN CONSECUTIVE INNINGS.**
4. No player shall sit more than two (2) innings in a game until and unless all players have sat out at least one inning.
5. Each player must play one (1) complete inning in the infield each game

#### 7. **PONY - NBBA BAT RULES:**

1. 2-5/8" barrel bats and 2-1/4" bats are LEGAL. If a 2-5/8" bat is a -3, it must be BBCOR certified. All other minus factor bats, whether 2-5/8" or 2-1/4" barrel, (-5,-7,-9, etc.), must be YBBCOR certified with the USABat licensing stamp on the bat in order to be used for league and all-star play. **All bats without the USABat stamp are illegal and not eligible for use during league play.**
2. 2-3/4" barrel bats are ILLEGAL
3. Wood bats are LEGAL with a barrel no larger than 2-5/8"
4. **IF A LARGER BAT IS USED or deemed ILLEGAL, IT IS AN AUTOMATIC OUT.**

#### 8. **THROWING THE BAT:**

1. Any player who, after one warning, throws the bat while batting may be ejected from the game in the interests of player safety.

#### 9. **STEALING:**

1. Stealing and leadoffs are permitted.

**10. PLAYER EJECTION:**

1. Any player who is ejected from a game for game play or related conduct will be subject to a review of the play or conduct by the Division Coordinator who may impose an additional suspension. A player ejected from games twice during a single season shall be suspended from the team's next one (1) to three (3) games (and shall not practice with the team during the time of suspension) upon review and ruling of the NBBA President and Division Coordinator. If a player is ejected three times in the same season, that player is subject to suspension for the remainder of the season upon review and ruling of the NBBA Board.

**11. PITCHING RESTRICTIONS:**

**NBBA has adopted the following for pitch counts as it pertains to days of rest:**

If a player pitches 66 or more pitches in a day, four (4) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches 51 -65 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches 36 - 50 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches 21 - 35 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches 1 - 20 pitches in a day, no calendar day of rest is required.

A pitcher may finish pitching to a given batter before going into next calendar day rest threshold. By way of example, if the pitcher starts a batter having thrown 33 pitches and finishes that same batter with 38 pitches, his days of rest threshold reverts to 35 pitches and the player would be required to observe 1 calendar day of rest.

**MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PITCHES FOR ALL PLAYERS  
ACROSS ALL DIVISIONS IS 50 UNTIL APRIL 1.**

**Maximum number of pitches by age group (April 1 and after):**

8 yr olds – 50 pitch max – may finish batter

9 yr olds – 55 pitch max– may finish batter

10 yr olds – 65 pitch max– may finish batter

11 yr olds – 75 pitch max– may finish batter

12 yr old and over – 85 pitch max– may finish batter

**Pitcher to catcher ban: Any pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a**

**game may not then play catcher for the remainder of the day. This is a hard stop. The pitcher reaching the 40<sup>th</sup> pitch who wishes to catch cannot finish the batter in this circumstance.**

**Any catcher who catches into his 4<sup>th</sup> inning will not be permitted to pitch. For purposes of this rule the catcher has started to catch into a fourth inning when the first pitch of the inning is delivered.**

**Once removed from the pitching position, a player cannot re-enter the game at the pitching position.**

**12. DROPPED THIRD STRIKE:**

1. The dropped third strike rule applies.

**13. MUST AVOID RULE (Per PONY):**

1. There shall be no collisions between base runners and defensive players. In all cases, without exception, the runner shall attempt to avoid a collision.
2. If the runner makes more than incidental contact with a defensive player, or intentionally makes contact with a defensive player, the runner shall be declared out. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the contact was more than incidental and unintentional, the runner shall be ejected from the game.
3. Should the umpire determine, in his judgment, that there was intent to injure on the part of the runner, in addition to the ejection, there will be an automatic one (1) game suspension that accompanies such an ejection and the incident will be reviewed and the player's fitness to return will be determined by the Board of Directors.
4. If the runner slides or runs past a base to avoid a collision because the defensive player is blocking access to the base without possession of the ball or without the ball directly en route to the defensive player, then the runner shall be declared "safe" and awarded the base. If, in the judgment of the umpire the runner would have attained an additional base safely, the umpire may awarded the runner one additional base. or any additional base(s) the umpire believes the runner would have reached but for the interference of the defensive player.

**14. WEEKLY EVENTS:** There shall be no more than four (4) events per week. Events are games or practices at which a coach and more than three team members are present.

**15. RAINOUTS** – Rainouts **may** be rescheduled at this level and every reasonable effort will be made to rescheduled rained out games. As long as the teams do not have back to back games a rained out game should be rescheduled at soonest available playing day.

**16. PROTESTS** – No post-game protests shall be allowed. Any issues or concerns over interpretation of these rules shall be determined in game and first shall be directed to the umpire. If resolution cannot be obtained through the umpire, the Division Coordinator shall be consulted. If the Division Coordinator cannot resolve the issue or is unavailable, then the

issue shall be directed to the Rules Chairman. If the Rules Chairman cannot resolve the issue or is unavailable, then the league president shall be consulted. In no case will the time of any game be extended in order to deal with a question of interpretation of these rules. Game results are final. Forfeits are as described in these rules.

17. **PLAYOFFS** - The higher seed gets choice of home or visitor in for first game only. Thereafter, a coin toss determines home or visiting team.

**LENGTH OF PLAYOFF GAMES/REGULATION GAME:** Each game shall be seven (7) innings in duration. There is a 10 run mercy rule in effect after the losing team has had a minimum of 5 at bats. In the event of a tie after 7 innings, additional innings will be played until a winner is determined. Any game which cannot be completed due to darkness will resume (most likely the following day) with the same score, conditions, etc. This means that no pitcher previously removed from the mound can re-enter the game as pitcher. Teams must use the same batting order and the same number of players. A player who was present and in the lineup at the start of the game on the previous day who is absent on the day the suspended game is continued may be withdrawn from the lineup, but if the player's absence causes the player's team to have less than 9 eligible players, it will be treated like an injured player and the team will take an out only for the missing player's next turn at bat. Both managers shall be responsible for agreeing on the conditions existing at the time a game is suspended and documenting the conditions and advising the Division Coordinator as soon as possible following the suspension of the game.

18. **INTENTIONAL WALKS** – While permissible, in the interest of fair play, intentional walks are discouraged. **If an intentional walk is issued, notwithstanding any Major League Baseball rule to the contrary, the pitcher MUST make the actual pitches and they will be tallied against the pitcher's pitch count.**
19. **COACHES IN THE DUGOUT** - Only the manager and up to two coaches are permitted in the dugout. No other parent shall view the game from or be present in the dugout during the game. Parents are spectators and should watch the game from the stands or a location other than the dugout.

**FREE AGENCY PLAYER POOL** – NBBA seeks to ensure that scheduled games go forward and that forfeitures, such as those occasioned by a lack of available players, are minimized. Additionally, NBBA seeks to provide opportunities for players to experience higher levels of competition where appropriate, for example, in a division with older players. Accordingly, teams are permitted to designate up to three players from the immediately lower division to be called upon for the purpose of filling a vacancy on a team roster for a given game (the "Free Agency Pool Players"). Managers are required to identify their pool of Free Agency Pool Players to their Division Coordinators at least two (2) days prior to the first pitch of the first game of the season. To the extent Free Agency Pool Players will be playing in leagues with older players, a parent or legal guardian of a Free Agency Pool Player must, prior to submission by any Manager of his/her designated pool, execute a Special Consent to permit participation by the player in the Free Agency Pool, whereby the parent or guardian will

acknowledge the increased risks and hazards of playing with older players, and waive any and all claims arising from same. Managers shall present all Special Consents to Division Coordinators prior to the first game, and Division Coordinators shall forward the Special Consents to the acting NBBA Secretary. No manager may alter or change his/her Free Agency Pool without notice to the Division Coordinator. Further, the Division Coordinator shall not accept any such changes in or to a team's Free Agency Pool without first receiving the associated Special Consent(s). **Up to three Free Agency Pool Players may be called upon to play in any particular game, but each pool player must be present or approved for play by the start of the game. A Pool Player may not enter the game once it has begun unless the Pool Player was present at the announced start of the game or approved by the Division Coordinator prior to the start of the game.** Free Agency Pool Players may not participate in playoff games. In addition, there will be no conflict with a Free Agency Pool Player's permanent team. Free Agency Pool Players may not pitch or catch. The Division Coordinator must approve the use and eligibility of every Free Agency Pool Player. Free Agency Pool Players are available to allow teams to field a complete nine player lineup and to avoid forfeits. Pool Players shall NOT be used to exclude normally rostered players or reduce their playing time. Violations of this rule will result in managerial suspension which may include multiple games. NOTE FOR BRONCO DIVISION ONLY: Player safety being a major concern, a nine year old playing in the Mustang division shall not be eligible to be placed on the Pool Player list without the specific consent of the Division Coordinator AND either the Board President or the Player Agent. The Division Coordinator must maintain a list of all nine year olds eligible for Bronco through the Free Agency Player Pool.

## **PONY DIVISION/CONFERENCE**

Pony increases the field size to 80-foot base paths with a 54-foot pitching distance. This continues to help players gradually increase their skills and strength as they prepare for high-school's 90-foot diamonds and 60-foot pitching. This league is for 13 and 14 year olds.

## **LOCAL PLAYING RULES**

Playing rules conform to the 2017 Official Pony Baseball Rules and Regulations with the following additions and exceptions:

### **1. ELIGIBILITY:**

All players must be league age 13 or 14 as outlined in Official Pony Baseball Rules and Regulations. League age is currently based on a July 31 cutoff date. Players who are league age 15 and in the 8th grade are eligible to play regular season and playoffs only, subject to the pitching restrictions included in these rules. Players who are league age 14 and in the 9th grade are eligible subject to the following restrictions: (a) if the player is a member of a High School Freshman team and completes the high school season, he cannot then join the Pony League.

However, if the player is cut or leaves the high school team prior to April 15th, he may join the Pony League, subject to the approval of the league board.

## **2. COMPOSITION OF CONFERENCE:**

The Conference will be comprised of teams from Orange County, including Costa Mesa, Newport Harbor and NBBA along with other potential leagues. These leagues will be referred to as the Costa Mesa Division and the Newport Harbor/NBBA Division, respectively.

## **3. SCHEDULE:**

All teams will play one another in accordance with a distributed schedule. There will be no games scheduled for the weekend preceding and following Spring Break and for Memorial Day Weekend. Weekday games will commence at 4:00 p.m. until Daylight Saving Time. After Daylight Saving time they will commence at 5pm. Saturday games generally will be scheduled at 9:00 a.m., 12:00 noon and 3:00 p.m.

## **4. UMPIRES:**

The league will employ an umpire service and two umpires will be scheduled to work each game. Payment for the service will be pro-rated based on the number of teams each area has. The home team is responsible for verifying that the umpires show and reporting any no-shows to either the Division Director or a designated umpire coordinator. In the event umpires are not present, the game **will** be played. The managers will agree on an umpire, or if they cannot agree, each will designate an umpire. The designated umpires will split time equally between field and plate duties.

## **5. POST SEASON TOURNAMENT:**

The Conference will sponsor a Post Season Double Elimination Tournament commencing after the Memorial Day Weekend. The teams will be seeded in the Post Season Tournament based upon a method agreed upon by the Presidents of the divisions. The pitching rules for post season will be the same as those used during the regular season.

## **6. THE STANDINGS:**

The winning manager is responsible for reporting the game's score to the Conference. NBBA will be responsible for keeping the standings and will transmit the standings sheet to each Division representative on a bi-weekly basis. To the extent possible, all standings will be posted on the NBBA web site at [-www.nbbaseball.org](http://www.nbbaseball.org).

## **7. SCORE KEEPING AND PITCHING ELIGIBILITY FORM:**

Each manager is responsible for maintaining, a Pitching Eligibility Form containing the date of the game, the names of each pitcher and the number of innings pitched by each respective pitcher. At the conclusion of each game each manager must have the Pitching Eligibility Form

signed (certified) by the official scorekeeper or the opposing manager. Each manager has the right to examine the opposing team's Pitching Eligibility Form before the start of a game to determine how many eligible innings each player has remaining for the game in question and/or a given pitcher's eligibility to pitch for that particular game.

### **8. PRE-GAME:**

Before the game starts the Manager or a Coach must have the Team Roster and the Medical Release Forms for all players present. The home team is responsible for setting up the field and supplying three new approved baseballs for each game. Each team shall be allowed 10 minutes of on-field practice prior to the scheduled game time. Each manager will make out three copies of his team's lineup before the game starts and give one copy to the opposing Manager, one copy to the Official Scorer and one copy to the Umpire. The home team must supply the Official Scorer.

### **9. UNIFORM:**

Each player shall be permanently assigned a uniform number at the beginning of the Season. Metal cleats are allowed.

### **10. LENGTH OF GAMES:**

Games shall be a maximum of seven innings in duration unless extended by extra innings or shortened as provided below or as provided in Rule 14. If a game is called for any reason it shall be complete game after five innings or, if the home team has scored more runs after four turns at bat than the visiting team has scored after five turns at bat. (Note: The words "five" and "four" shall be changed to "four" and "three", respectively, for games played prior to Daylight Saving Time at non-lighted fields.) If a game is called for any reason before it is a completed game, or when the score is tied, it shall be considered a suspended game. It shall be resumed from the point it was stopped at a time scheduled by League officials. There shall be no time limit (except due to umpire availability) unless there is a game scheduled later on the same field being used.

When there is a game scheduled to follow a game on the same field, no game will exceed two hours and forty-five minutes and no new inning will start after two and one-half hours. The umpire will have sole discretion with respect to calling a game for darkness or rain.

### **11. BATTING:**

17. The batting order will consist of an amount equal to the fewest number of players available to either of the two competing teams at the scheduled start of each game. For example, Team A is playing Team B and Team A has 10 players present while Team B has 11 players present. Both teams will bat 10 players and the 11th player on Team B will be a substitute. The substitute(s) must bat at least once in the game. A starter or substitute can return to the lineup only in their original place in the batting order (unlimited times).

18. A team may play with a minimum of 8 players without forfeiting a game but must take an “out” at the 9th batter’s spot in the lineup. Should a player for any reason have to vacate his spot in the batting order, no out will be recorded and the game may proceed, unless the departure of the player shall leave only eight players remaining, in which case the batting order shall be reduced by one and the team will take the ninth spot as an out. There is no penalty (“out”) to the team batting less than nine players if the reason for the player leaving is due to injury. The player who has vacated the lineup and field of play may not return to the lineup for the remainder of the game unless the reason for the player’s departure was an injury.
19. A player arriving late for a game may play provided that the player is added to the final spot in the batting order. Pursuant to Rule 11(1) if the late arriving player is a member of the team with the fewest number of players, then the batting order of both teams shall be increased to be in harmony with the rule. Alternatively, if the late arriving player is part of the team with the greater number of players, then the late arriving player shall be a substitute as set forth in Rule 11(1)

## **12. MANDATORY PLAY AND SUBSTITUTION:**

Each player must play defensively for three complete innings and no player can sit out for more than one consecutive defensive inning. A combination of outs in different innings cannot be utilized to satisfy the three complete defensive innings rule. In the event a team has 13 players, any player may sit two consecutive innings but must play defensively for three complete innings.

## **13. EJECTION:**

20. A player ejected from a game **will** be suspended from playing in the team's next game subject to review and ruling of the NBBA President and Pony Division Director.
21. A player ejected from a game for a second time during the same season shall be suspended from the team's next game and up to a maximum of three consecutive games and shall not be permitted to attend any team practices subject to review and ruling of the NBBA President and Pony Division Director. Any player ejected for a third time in the same season, is subject to suspension for the remainder of the season, including any post-season playoff or tournament, subject to review and ruling of the NBBA Board

## **14. TEN (10) RUN RULE:**

If a team is leading its opponent by at least 10 runs after five or more complete innings have been played or after four and one-half innings if the home team shall have a lead of 10 runs or more, the game shall be terminated with team in the lead declared the winner.

## **15. PITCHING RULES:**

**NBBA has adopted the following for pitch counts as it pertains to days of rest:**

If a player pitches 66 or more pitches in a day, four (4) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches 51 -65 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches 36 - 50 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches 21 - 35 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches 1 - 20 pitches in a day, no calendar day of rest is required.

A pitcher may finish pitching to a given batter before going into next calendar day rest threshold. By way of example, if the pitcher starts a batter having thrown 33 pitches and finishes that same batter with 38 pitches, his days of rest threshold reverts to 35 pitches and the player would be required to observe 1 calendar day of rest.

**Maximum number of pitches by age group:**

12 yr old and over – 85 pitch max– may finish batter

**Pitcher to catcher ban: Any pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game may not then play catcher for the remainder of the day. This is a hard stop. The pitcher reaching the 40<sup>th</sup> pitch who wishes to catch cannot finish the batter in this circumstance.**

**Any catcher who catches into his 4<sup>th</sup> inning will not be permitted to pitch. For purposes of this rule the catcher has started to catch into a fourth inning when the first pitch of the inning is delivered.**

A league age 15 year-old player may not pitch or play catcher.

**16. NO MUST SLIDE RULE:**

There is no “must slide” rule in Pony; however, a runner must make an attempt to avoid contact. In deciding whether a runner is safe or out, the fact that contact is made is not determinative, but rather should be judged on whether the player made a reasonable effort to avoid contact. Players not attempting to avoid contact should be called out. A flagrant violation of this rule or an attempt to injure should result in an ejection.

**17. INTENTIONAL WALKS** – While permissible, in the interest of fair play, intentional walks are discouraged. If an intentional walk is issued, notwithstanding any Major League Baseball rule to the contrary, the pitcher **MUST** make the actual pitches and they will be tallied against the pitcher’s pitch count. If a team in this division is playing in a league or tournament which permits intentional walks without requiring pitches to be thrown, the pitches will not be

counted against the pitcher's count, unless the team is playing another Newport Beach Baseball Association team, in which case, pitches will be counted against the pitcher's count.

## **MANAGERS CODE OF CONDUCT**

All Managers and Coaches, as a condition to their selection and continued service as Managers and Coaches, are expected to adhere to the following Code of Conduct:

1. Managers are to recognize that they are role models and examples for the players and must conduct themselves accordingly, demonstrating good sportsmanship at all times, including
  - a. No swearing or abusive language;
  - b. No ridiculing or harassing, berating or engaging in excessive questioning of umpires, especially youth umpires. If a manager wishes to question the interpretation of a rule (not balls or strikes, or safe or out calls) or needs to discuss a situation with the umpire, he must first ask for time out and, if granted, then discuss or question in a courteous manner;
  - c. No throwing or kicking of bats, gloves, helmets or any other equipment;

- d. No verbal abuse or ridicule of any player on his or her team or on the opposing team;
- e. No threats of physical abuse; no pushing, shoving or grabbing of shoulders or similar acts of "discipline";
- f. No use of alcohol or tobacco at any games, practices, trips to the batting cages or any other team or league function;
- g. **The Manager is responsible for any and all prohibited activity, as described above, not only for himself, but also for his or her coaches, players and parents of players. *The manager shall advise all players, coaches and parents of players that the Manager can and will be ejected and/or suspended for their conduct which fails to comport to these standards and/or the Parent Code of Conduct.***

2. The Manager understands that he is representing the NBBA at all times. The statements and conduct of Managers significantly determines the reputation of our baseball program in the eyes of parents, players, spectators and visitors. It is therefore the responsibility of each Manager to conduct himself in a manner which is in the best interests of the NBBA at all times. Complaints and concerns about the management of the program and the NBBA should be addressed in private with the executive committee of the Association only! Failure to abide by this rule is cause for immediate removal of a Manager or coach.

3. Once the game begins the Manager is to remain in the dugout at all times (unless permission is given by the umpire prior to the game), except when coaching a base or when time out is requested and granted for a conference with a pitcher or umpire, or for an injury. Conferences with batters should be limited and generally not used more than once per inning. Discussions with batters should occur in the on-deck circle or in the dugout. There shall be NO food in the dugout at any time before, during or after the games. Beverages are permitted.

4. Roster adjustments are made solely by the Player Agent or the league President. Managers cannot solicit prospective replacement players.

5. No solicitation of funds from team sponsors is permitted. Solicitation of funds from team sponsors is permitted only when specifically endorsed by the league, but managers shall not engage in a solicitation of funds unless specifically directed by the league. All sponsor funds are to be turned over to the League.

6. Each Manager must know the rules for his or her division, including the baseball rules, the PONY league rules and local NBBA rules adjustments. Protests are not allowed in the lower divisions and Managers in the upper divisions should work to avoid any protests. Each Manager is responsible for knowing his or her division rules regarding pitching limitation, mandatory playing time and batting order. Violation of these rules can result in warnings, suspensions or expulsions from the manager position.

7. Only the Manager and two (2) coaches can be in the dugout. No non-players are allowed in the dugout or standing behind the dugout.

**8. The Manager is responsible for his or her players' parents and supporters. The Manager must keep his team's crowd under control. Verbal comments to batters from behind the backstop and comments directed toward the field, including to the umpire or the catcher are not to be tolerated. No spectators, players, or player's parents are permitted behind the backstop during the game.**

9. The Manager is responsible for the players on his or her team. No ridiculing of each other or any of the opposing team's players is tolerated. Constructive criticism is the responsibility of the Manager, not the players. Conduct in the dugout during the game is the responsibility of the Manager. While baseball "chatter" is encouraged, loud and obnoxious noises or screaming, the intent of which is to "rattle" the opposing pitcher, is prohibited. Intentional distractions, such as banging or rattling the dugout fences and bat racks, shall not be tolerated.

10. In the event a player should require more than minor disciplinary action (calisthenics, etc.), such action should be taken in private with the player. Players should not be disciplined in front of their teammates. Should the Manager "bench" a player during a game as a disciplinary measure, the Division Director must be notified of the disciplinary action taken.

11. The Association's goal is to have all games be competitively played, without losing sight of the primary goal of the program, i.e. the development of our children into responsible young adults by providing a healthy and enjoyable baseball program. In keeping with that spirit both "blow-out" scores and non-competitive "dream" games are to be avoided (see #19).

12. Cooperation is necessary between both teams for:

- (a) field maintenance,
- (b) filling in umpiring responsibilities if the umpire is not present,
- (c) scorekeeping and
- (d) field clean up.

**13. All Managers will be held responsible to assist in maintaining the fields. This includes the chalking of the baselines before each game as well as the clean-up (raking, watering) of the field after the games is over. The Division Director shall evaluate each Manager's contribution in this regard.**

14. Be on time for games and practices. Do not leave players unattended after practices or games.

15. Have line-up cards prepared before the game to assure timely start and proper attention to warm-up.

16. Manager is responsible for all equipment. Do not allow players to throw or otherwise abuse equipment. Turn in equipment promptly at the end of the season.

17. Be certain a responsible coach is available at all times that the Manager cannot be present for any reason.

18. The Manager is responsible for bringing medical release forms to all practices, games, trips to batting cages, and any other team events.

19. The Manager should create a positive team attitude toward field maintenance, preservation of equipment, league events, and fundraising events.

20. The Manager should schedule a reasonable number of practices to assure the proper education of, but should not work them excessively to the point of frustration or burn-out. No more than four "events" (practices, games, organized trips to batting cages) are permitted per week (Sunday through Saturday) whether or not the manager deems such events to be "voluntary" or "mandatory. If a division rule stipulates fewer than four events maximum in a week, the rules for that division are controlling).

21. The Manager should encourage participation by all the players on a roster, especially the weaker ones. Never ridicule players or discourage their involvement. It is important that each player feels they are an important part of the team. It is the Manager's responsibility to create that feeling. The Association encourages each Manager to try to play his or her players in positions that they would like to try. However, these efforts may be mitigated by the overall desire to maintain a balanced game environment. While each player can be allowed their "dream" game or inning, a balanced game environment also should be a goal. "Dream" games in which all or numerous players at the same time play positions to which they are inexperienced or unaccustomed and which result in lopsided scores are prohibited. It is a Manager's responsibility to educate the players about the game and the players' parents about the need to maintain a balanced game environment. It is important to remember that in the Shetland and Pinto Divisions, no score is kept and no standings are maintained. The goal of these Divisions is to train the players in the fundamental baseball skills and the principles of team play. At these levels the Manager in interacting with and in conducting himself or herself with his or her players must emphasize the goals of these Divisions when working both individually and in the aggregate. For the Mustang, Bronco and Pony Divisions, while statistics are maintained and standings are kept, it is important that the display or use of statistics be constructive and not in a manner that is critical of weaker players. Questions about the display, presentation, or proper use of such statistics, should be discussed with your Division Coordinator.

22. Direct all items of conflict or concern to your Division Coordinator. The Division Coordinator will be responsible for the resolution of all Division issues. If the issue involves interpretation of the rules, and the Division Coordinator cannot resolve the issue or is unavailable, then the issue shall be directed to the Rules Chairman. If the Rules Chairman cannot resolve the issue or is unavailable, then the league president shall be consulted. In no case will any game be extended in order to deal with a question of interpretation of these rules.

23. The NBBA has developed a "curriculum" by Division that denotes what each Manager at each level is responsible to teach to the players on his or her team. This curriculum addresses the fundamental baseball skills to be taught at each level of play. You will be evaluated by the League on the number of and degree to which your players retain and demonstrate the specific elements of this curriculum at the conclusion of the season. This evaluation will be the primary

determinant of your future managing or coaching positions in the NBBA program.

24. If a Manager/Coach is ejected from a game by an umpire, that Manager/Coach shall be suspended for the following game. Suspension means that the manager or coach cannot be present at the field for the game and cannot attend for any reason. If a Manager/Coach is ejected for a 2nd time, that Manager/Coach will be suspended for three additional games and will not be entitled to attend practices until after the third game is played. If a Manager/Coach is ejected for a 3rd time, that Manager/Coach will be suspended for the remainder of the season (includes practice) and will not be allowed to Manage/Coach the following season.

25. Managers and/or coaches can and will be relieved from participation in the NBBA Program if it is determined that their conduct violated either the letter or the spirit of the Code of Conduct or the Rules and Regulations to which this Code is a part.