

# Tournament Rules



[Download  
Rules PDF](#)

**Updated by tournament director: 5/24/11**

Important Note: It is MANDATORY that every coach carry a copy of the rules at all times. A copy of the rules should be posted on the bulletin board by the snack bar at Harvard Park.

Rules and Information-Also see below special rules for Pinto Kid Pitch, Pinto Machine Pitch and Shetland Coach Pitch.

## DECLARATION OF TRAVEL TEAM STATUS

(Please do not apply if there is a doubt in your mind)

Please Read These Rules Carefully

If your team has any ONE of the following attributes, it is considered to be a travel team and does not qualify for the tournament: (please do not try to sneak in travel ball teams)

1. You have players from multiple cities or regions-that are not eligible in your regular league season. All players must be from one league.
2. Team mates on the participating team do not play within the same league during the regular playing season.

Any exceptions must be approved by the Tournament Director.

## General Information

Please keep in mind that this is intended to be a FUN tournament for the players and their families. Confrontational actions by coaches, players or family members will not be tolerated and will result in game forfeiture and or removal from the tournament. We do have paid umpires but umpire abuse will not be tolerated in any fashion.

The tournament will be governed by the Official Rules of Baseball as published by the Sporting News, as modified by the most current PONY Baseball rule book and information provided in this document. The Official Rules of Baseball can be purchased at Barnes & Noble and other bookstores (as well as some sporting goods stores) and the PONY rule book may be downloaded at [www.PONY.org](http://www.PONY.org). Irvine PONY Baseball and the tournament director have the final decision making power in regards to rule changes for this tournament.

Game and Coaches Meeting Requirements-(This notebook must be at all games for review if necessary)

All coaches will need to bring a notebook with the following items in plastic sleeves for easy viewing:

1. Team roster printed from the website and/or typed for easy reading.
2. Current utility bill from the primary residence of each child-(this must be the address the player used during the regular season). Cell phone bills are invalid.
3. Photo of each child-(this does not have to be a baseball photo, any photo will do)

4. Pitching roster-(A blank roster that may be downloaded from this website)
5. Proof of league insurance-(this must be current and cover the team/league registering)
6. Signed medical release form for each and every child (usually the leagues regular registration form)
7. Copy of a birth certificate for each player-(this may be from any country, if not available-some sort of government paperwork is required, ie. passport or medical paperwork from a doctor)

#### Special Rules

##### Age

The Age cutoff or determination date is posted on the home page of this website.  
Whatever your players age is on that day is what division he/she is eligible to play in.

##### Roster Size

No less than 9 or more than 15 players may be rostered. Under exceptional circumstances, we will allow more than 15 players, but the request must be approved by the Irvine PONY Tournament Director no later than May 1st.

##### Roster Changes

No roster changes will be allowed unless a team drops below 9 players. Any roster change must be approved by the Tournament Director. **THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO LOANING OF PLAYERS FROM ONE ROSTER TO ANOTHER e.g., IF YOUR TEAM DOES NOT MAKE THE PLAYOFFS, YOU MAY NOT LOAN A PLAYER TO A TEAM WHICH HAS MADE THE FINALS...PERIOD! THE PENALTY IS DISQUALIFICATION FROM THE TOURNAMENT WITHOUT REFUNDS.**

##### Home Team

A coin toss prior to game time will determine the home team. Dugout selection is as follows: 3rd base is home and 1st base is guests. Please follow this seating chart accordingly. Try to find the other coach earlier in the day to do the coin toss.

##### Lineup Choices

You may bat either (a) your entire lineup, and substitute freely defensively, or (b) bat 9 and substitute per PONY rules. A DH may be used with choice B. **-(EXCEPT IN SHETLAND COACH PITCH AND PINTO MACHINE PITCH)** In these two divisions all batters must bat the entire game.

You must announce before each game what your choice is. Both managers don't need to agree (i.e., one may bat 9 while the other bats the entire lineup, etc.) If you choose to bat your entire lineup, you may not change once the game is underway.

Pitchers **MAY NEVER** reenter in the pitching position once removed from the mound-**(EXCEPT IN PINTO MACHINE PITCH AND SHETLAND COACH PITCH)**. The pitcher may remain in the game in an alternate defensive position. However, he **MUST** remain and hit in the same order in the lineup as previously placed.

##### Game Limits

<b>Divisions</b>	<b>Innings</b>	<b>No New Inning</b>	<b>Drop Dead</b>
Shetland	6	1:15	1:30
Pinto-Machine	6	MP-1:15	1:30
Pinto-Kid Pitch		KP-1:45	2:00

Mustang	6	2:00	2:15
Bronco	7	2:00	2:15
Pony	7	2:00	2:15

If drop dead is called and the visiting team has the lead, the score reverts back to the last complete inning. If it appears to the umpire that a team is purposely delaying the game to reach drop dead status, the umpire can speed up the game by calling players out or declaring a forfeit after issuing one warning.

If your game starts late, and there is another game following on that field, you must be off the field at least 5 minutes before the next scheduled game time, even if that means a shorter game. There will be no extra inning games (Except for the QUARTERFINAL, SEMI-FINAL and CHAMPIONSHIP games and/or games announced by the tournament director), a tie at the end of regulation play will be recorded as such.

Time limits apply to all games except Semi-Finals and Championship games. In these games there will be no time limits.

Note: The tournament director reserves the right to amend the above rule if there are restrictions on field usage imposed by the City of Irvine.

#### Field Dimensions

<b>Division</b>	<b>Pitching</b>	<b>Base</b>
Shetland	35'	60'
Pinto Machine	38'-42'	60'
Pinto Kid Pitch	38'	60'
Mustang	44'	60'
Bronco	48'	70'
PONY 13U	54'	80'
PONY 14U	60'6"	90'

#### Ready Play Rules

To expedite play, a batter may not step more than one foot out of the batters box to take signals. One warning will be given per batter. Thereafter, each infraction will result in the umpire calling time and the batter will be issued a strike.

A courtesy runner will be allowed for the pitcher or the catcher, regardless of the number of outs. If all players are batting, then the last out is the courtesy runner. If less than all players are batting, then a player who is not then in the lineup shall be the courtesy runner.

No more than one offensive time out is allowed per inning per team, other than to check an injury or repair equipment.

No more than one defensive time out is allowed per inning, except to check an injury or repair equipment. On the second defensive time out, the pitcher must be changed.

While batting, have your catcher getting ready for the next inning. Most delays are caused by catchers not being suited up.

#### Slide or Avoid Rule

Players MUST slide or AVOID contact to injure or disrupt a defensive player. If the runner elects to slide the slide must be legal. The runner must slide directly to the base or away from the play. A slide with the spikes above the fielder's knee or the umpire determines that a player intended to harm the defensive player is considered malicious contact. The player will be recorded as an out and ejected from the game. The catcher or other defensive player may not block any base or home plate without possession of the ball or be in the act of receiving the ball. The fielder will be guilty of obstruction as in "Official Baseball Rules." Metal cleats may be worn by bronco and pony divisions only.

#### Pitching Rules

The 40 hour rest rule is not in effect. Despite this modification, please take care of your pitchers arms and don't over extend them. Remember, one pitch to a batter in an inning constitutes an inning pitched. You must keep pitching records on hand in your notebook for review at anytime. The pitching roster provided by the league at the tournament meeting must be signed off by an umpire after each game.

#### Pitching Limits

<b>Division</b>	<b>Per Game Limit</b>	<b>Per Day Limit</b>
Pinto	2 Innings	3 Innings
Mustang	3 Innings	6 Innings
Bronco	4 Innings	7 Innings
Pony	7 Innings	7 Innings

#### Mercy Rule

10 Runs after 4 innings (home team leading) or 4 complete innings (visiting team winning).

(This rule does not apply in Shetland or Pinto Machine Pitch Divisions- however if the game becomes mathematically impossible to win, the umpire will call the game)

#### Warm Ups-

Plan on throwing warm-ups only. In-field practice will not be available between games. Please do not push this rule. We have a lot of teams playing, help us save our infields.

#### Protests

There are NOT ANY! Don't even try...you have a problem with a call, an interpretation or anything what-so-ever, you need to call time and the Head Coach may quietly discuss it with the umpire. HIS DECISION IS FINAL...PERIOD!

KEEP YOUR FANS IN CONTROL - If a fan becomes unruly the head coach will be warned one time. The second warning will be the removal of the head coach, the next warning will be the removal of the asst. coach. If the problem persists, the game will be forfeited by the team which is causing the problem.

Equipment: All PONY and Little League approved baseball bats are allowed. Big Barrel and wood bats are accepted. Baseballs are real baseballs except in Pinto Machine Pitch and Shetland Coach Pitch-(see special rules listed below for either machine pitch balls or the safety balls for Shetland). 2 5/8 is the maximum size allowed.

#### Footwear

Metal cleats are allowed in Bronco and above.

### Score Reporting Procedures

Keep your own score books, but the score keepers must confer with each other after each half inning to make sure there are no disagreements. If a disagreement arises, the umpire is the final arbiter.

The winning team is responsible for reporting scores. Any scores which are not registered will be considered incomplete and not recorded.

Important Note: Mobile phone game score input and reporting will be available for this tournament. The information on reporting scores may be found on our website under the coaches corner link.

The pitching roster is to be signed after each game and carried with you at all times. If you are not able to provide your pitching record to the opposing team upon request, it is up to the opposing coach to determine if wants to play your team. If he chooses not to play your team, your team will log the loss as 1-0. Make sure you have your pitching logs at all times.

### Game Play

Each team will play 3, 4 or more games depending on their division. If your division only has one pool, the two top teams in the pool will advance to the final game on Monday. If your division has two pools, the winner of each pool will advance to the final game on Monday.-(The tournament director reserves the right to modify the pool play advancements if necessary)

### Tie-Breaker Priority

Win-loss record

Head to head record

Least runs allowed

Coin toss

Note: Most Runs Scored will NOT be used as a determination for WIN/LOSS-(it is a tournament but be kind if you are winning by an astronomical amount)

### Notebooks

Each team is required to have their notebook with them at all times. If a coach refuses to show their notebook to the opposing coach, that team will be disqualified and take a loss for that game recorded as 1-0. The notebook may also be reviewed after the game if necessary for any reason by the other coach. If either coach is uncomfortable sharing their book on the field, you must find the tournament director immediately to officiate the viewing.

### Other Stuff

Parking at some of the parks may be a nightmare. Arrive in plenty of time. If you're running late, drop the player off and direct him to his field, and then go park your car.

### Fields and Dugouts

Only players, coaches and team moms will be allowed in the dugout or on the field during play. No siblings or parents shall be there. Please clean up your trash after each game.

### ADDITIONAL PINTO KID PITCH DIVISION RULES:

#### Pitching

There are no balks. There is no dropped third strike rule. A third strike is recorded as an out even if the catcher drops the ball. The strike zone will be expanded at the discretion of

the umpire.

#### Fielding

Only 3 outfielders are allowed.

#### Base Running

Base stealing of 2nd or 3rd base is allowed. Base runners may not steal home or advance home on an attempt by the catcher to throw the runner out at 3rd base on a steal or a pick off attempt. Base runners are not permitted to lead off and must remain in contact with the base until the ball has been hit or the pitch crosses home plate. A player who leaves a base before then shall be called out.

All runners may advance on a hit ball at their own risk. Once the ball is under the control of an infielder and the forward progress of the lead base runner has been stopped, the umpire shall call "time out." Players may ask for a time out at any time, but the umpire shall not call a time out until the progress of the lead base runner has been halted. If the fielding team attempts to make a play on a runner before time out is called, then the umpire shall not call time out until active pursuit of a base runner has stopped. (Example: Baserunners are advancing to second and third. The throw goes to the third baseman, but he is too late in trying to tag the sliding runner. Before time out is called, the third baseman tries to throw out the runner advancing to second. Time out will not be called by the umpire because the defensive player kept the ball in play, rather than letting the umpire call time out.) Once time out is called by the umpire, play is "dead" and no play can be made on any baserunner. The lead baserunner shall return to the base from which his forward progress has been stopped. All other baserunners shall proceed or return to the base to which they were nearest when time out was called, unless that base is occupied by the lead base runner.

#### Scoring

An inning is complete when (a) three outs are recorded or (b) the offensive team has scored 5 runs. There is no run limit in the final inning. The final inning may be determined based on time limitations and is frequently not the 6th inning. Managers and umpire shall agree on the final inning. If managers can not agree, then umpire shall decide. All players are eligible to bat each inning regardless of whether they played in the field that inning.

#### ADDITIONAL PINTO MACHINE PITCH RULES

(Note: we use a real baseball made especially for this machine)

The pitching machine will be throwing the below mentioned baseballs from 38 feet at approximately 35-40 miles per hour.

A. Each half inning will end when the offensive team scores five (5) runs or the defensive team records three (3) outs except as listed below.

B. Each team will be allowed to score unlimited runs in the last inning only. Their half inning at bat will end upon the completion of one of the following:

I. The defensive team records three (3) outs.

II. The offensive team bats their entire lineup as described below:

C. Each team will bat the same number of players in the last inning (i.e. if Team A has 12 players and Team B has 10 players. Team B will bat once through the line up and then 2 additional batters will hit in order). This only occurs if the defensive team does not record 3 outs.

D. 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. The game will be stopped until this rule is adhered to.

E. Players are NOT ALLOWED to operate the pitching machine in any manner.

F. Each player will be given 5 pitches from the machine. If on the 5th pitch the ball is swung on and not fouled off or hit into play the batter is out. If it is fouled off in any fashion and not caught by the catcher, the batter continues to hit until he either hits or misses the ball. This could be many pitches.

F. Bunting is not allowed. A batter must take a full swing.

G. 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.)

H. No lead offs. Players cannot break contact with the base until the batter hits the ball. PENALTY...the first illegal lead off shall result in a warning to the team of the runner. The second illegal lead off by the team, the runner shall be called out.

I. Base stealing is not allowed.

J. A play is over once an infielder not an outfielder is in complete possession of the ball within the compounds of the baselines. The player with the ball must have control of the ball and call time with his hands in the air.

K. One base on an overthrow does not apply. You may advance until the ball is dead as described in the above paragraph.

L. There will be chalked 5-foot hash marks between 1st and 2nd base, 2nd and 3rd base, and 3rd and Home plate. These hash marks will be the guidelines for base advancements. If a player passes the hash mark in the middle of 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 hash mark, they must go back to the previous base.

M. 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.

O. The pitcher shall be positioned next to the pitching machine and not directly in front of the machine, with at least one foot in the circle that surrounds the pitching machine until the ball is hit.

P. Teams are limited to six (6) players in the infield: pitcher, catcher, first base, second base, third base and short stop.

Q. Teams are limited to four (4) players in the outfield: left field, left-center field, right-center field and right field.

R. Outfielders may participate in infield play.

S. Outfielders must remain at least fifteen (15) feet behind the baseline (or on the outfield grass on most fields) until a ball is put in play.

T. 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 pass balls and put them into a bucket behind home plate next to the backstop). The batting coach must remain as close to the backstop or in the coaching box behind home plate.

U. 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 playing field.

V. 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 pitching coach's head to the intended target. If an umpire feels that a coach did not move, the batter or runner may be called out.

W. When on defense, coaches are not allowed in the field of play. Rather, one coach may be positioned on the left field and right field foul lines. Coaches must be on the grass and not near the 1st or 3rd offensive base coaches. Only one coach per foul line is allowed.

X. The pitching machine may at times throw bad pitches. It is up to the umpire to call a "NO PITCH" if they feel the batter could not hit the ball due to it being wild.

Y. If at anytime during the game a throw from a defensive player hits the pitching machine, the ball is dead and the runners advance one base.

Z. There is NO mercy rule in Pinto Machine Pitch. However, when the game becomes mathematically impossible to win the umpire shall end the game.

#### ADDITIONAL SHETLAND COACH PITCH RULES

A. Each half inning will end when the offensive team scores five (5) runs or the defensive team records three (3) outs except as listed below.

B. Each team will be allowed to score unlimited runs in the last inning only. Their half inning at bat will end upon the completion of one of the following:

1. The defensive team records three (3) outs.

2. The offensive team bats their entire lineup as described below:

C. Each team will bat the same number of players in the last inning (i.e. if Team A has 12 players and Team B has 10 players. Team B will bat once through the line up and then 2 additional batters will hit in order). This only occurs if the defensive team does not record 3 outs.

D. All players must wear a protective cup. 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.

E. Players are NOT ALLOWED to pitch to other players.

F. Each player will be given 5 pitches from the machine. If on the 5th pitch the ball is swung on and not fouled off or hit into play the batter is out. If it is fouled off in any fashion and not caught by the catcher, the batter continues to hit until he either hits or misses the ball. This could be many pitches. Baseballs are not to be layed on the ground during play. Buckets are not permitted out by the pitching coach.

F. Bunting is not allowed. A batter must take a full swing.

G. 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.)

H. No lead offs. Players cannot break contact with the base until the batter hits the ball.

PENALTY...the first illegal lead off shall result in a warning to the team of the runner. The second illegal lead off by the team, the runner shall be called out.

I. Base stealing is not allowed.

J. A play is over once an infielder not an outfielder is in complete possession of the ball within the compounds of the baselines. The player with the ball must have control of the ball and call time with his hands in the air.

K. One base on an overthrow does not apply. You may advance until the ball is dead as described in the above paragraph.

L. There will be chalked 5-foot hash marks between 1st and 2nd base, 2nd and 3rd base, and 3rd and Home plate. These hash marks will be the guidelines for base advancements. If a player passes the hash mark in the middle of 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 hash mark, they must go back to the previous base.

M. A batted ball that hits the pitching coach is declared dead. The hit is considered a pitch and the batter hits again. If this is the 5th pitch, one more pitch will be awarded to the batter. The base runners must not advance on a pitch that hits the pitching coach.

O. The pitcher shall have at least one foot in the pitching circle until the ball is hit.

P. Teams are limited to six (6) players in the infield: pitcher, catcher, first base, second base, third base and short stop.

Q. Teams are limited to four (4) players in the outfield: left field, left-center field, right-center field and right field.

R. Outfielders may participate in infield play.

S. Outfielders must remain at least fifteen (15) feet behind the baseline (or on the outfield grass on most fields) until a ball is put in play.

T. 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 pass balls and put them into a bucket behind home plate next to the backstop). The batting coach must remain as close to the backstop or in the coaching box behind home plate.

U. 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 playing field.

V. 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 pitching coach's head to the intended target. If an umpire feels that a coach did not move, the batter or runner may be called out.

W. When on defense, coaches are not allowed in the field of play. Rather, one coach may be positioned on the left field and right field foul lines. Coaches must be on the grass and not near the 1st or 3rd offensive base coaches. Only one coach per foul line is allowed.

X. The pitching coach may at times throw bad pitches. Sorry, these pitches do count.

Y. If at anytime during the game a throw from a defensive player hits the pitching coach, the ball is dead and the runners advance one base.

Z. There is NO mercy rule in Shetland. However, when the game becomes mathematically impossible to win the umpire shall end the game.

Disclaimer to all rules: there will be issues and situations that test the integrity of the above listed rules during the Tournament. Please note that the Irvine PONY Baseball Tournament director and/or committee reserve the right to change or modify any of the above items at any time to better serve the tournament as a whole.