

**TORO PONY BASEBALL
BRONCO RULES**

UPDATED: 2/7/19

The rules governing play will be in the following order: (1) Toro PONY league rules listed below; (2) the current year edition of the PONY Baseball/Softball, Inc., rules blue; (3) the current year edition of the “Official Major League Baseball Rules”, published by the Sporting News.

New Bat Rule - IN CONJUNCTION WITH USA BASEBALL AND ITS OTHER PARTICIPATING NATIONAL MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS, PONY BASEBALL HAS ADOPTED THE NEW USA BASEBALL BAT STANDARD (USABat). EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2018, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE -3 BAT (BBCOR CERTIFIED), ALL OTHER 2-5/8 INCH MINUS FACTOR BATS (-5, -7, -9, ETC) and 2-1/4” BATS MUST BE YBBCOR CERTIFIED WITH THE USABat LICENSING STAMP ON THE BAT IN ORDER TO BE USED FOR LEAGUE AND TOURNAMENT PLAY. 2-1/4” and 2-5/8 INCH MINUS FACTOR BATS (-5, -7, -9, ETC) USED IN 2017 WILL BE ILLEGAL TO USE IN 2018.

USE OF PLAYERS

- a) Each player present at the game must play at least two innings in the field in every game and one at bat. Except for the pitcher, players may enter or be removed from the field at any time, at the discretion of the Manager. Starting players must re-enter the game in their original spot in the batting line up. If a player starts an inning and the inning is not completed due to a run rule or other Chief Umpire call, then the start will count as an inning played
- b) The continuous batting order does apply.
- c) There will not be a designated hitter.
- d) Nine defensive players in the field. You must have eight defensive players to start a game. You may play a game with only eight defensive players if that is all you have in attendance. If you drop below eight defensive players at any time during the game, the game will be a forfeit.
- e) If a player must leave for any reason other than being ejected his/her place in the batting order will be eliminated without penalty. If this causes the team to drop below eight players, even in the case of injuries, then the team will forfeit.
- f) The minimum two-inning defensive playing time rule will be enforced starting in the fifth inning, even if the ten-run rule applies in that inning, in the following manner: if a team ten run rules another in the fifth inning and a defensive player played at least one inning, there is no violation.

- g) It is the team Managers responsibility to encourage all team players to attend all practices and games. However, if a player misses one game or two practices without notice to the Manager, the Manager does not have to play that player in the next game. The Manager must notify the following if he/she is to invoke this disciplinary action before the start of the effected game: Parent/Guardian; opposing team manager prior to the start of the game so that the scorebook can be recorded correctly; league Bronco Director.
- h) Violations of the batting and fielding rules will be remedied as follows: For a first offense in batting during the regular season, the batter that is overlooked will be required in the next game to bat leadoff in the lineup and play the entire game. If the violation occurs a second time, or a first time during the last game of the regular season, the offending team will forfeit the game. For defensive violations, a first offense will require that player to play in the field for the entire next game. If the violation occurs a second time, or a first time during the last game of the regular season, the offending team will forfeit the game.
- i) Protests for rules violations must be made by the opposing Manager to the league Bronco Director. The Home team scorebook is the official scorebook from which protests will be decided. No protest will be heard more than (24) hours after the completion of a game.
- j) Players missing practices and or games due to travel ball must inform Manager and Bronco Director in advance.

BATTING ORDER

- a) There is a continuous batting order in Bronco level.
- b) Batting out of order will result in an out for that player and any base runners that advanced must return to their starting positions. The violation occurs after the batter takes the first pitch.
- c) If a player is ejected from a game for any reason their spot in the batting order is an automatic out.
- d) If a player leaves the game due to an injury or any other reason other than ejection, then their spot in the batting order is eliminated without penalty.
- e) There will be no intentional walks at any time.
- f) No on-deck batter allowed inside of the fence line.
- g) Once all players have batted through the order once, a late arriving player cannot enter the game.
- h) The batting order will consist of all players. There is no designated hitter.

PITCHING RULES

- a) No pitcher may pitch more than 85 pitches in one game. **Please refer to the Pitch Chart for days rest needed per pitch count. NEW for 2019 (All-Stars/Some tournaments), No pitcher shall appear in a game as a pitcher for three consecutive days, regardless of the pitch count.**
- b) Pitchers reaching their maximum number of pitches in a day while pitching to a batter, may finish pitching to that batter before being removed.
- c) No pitcher shall appear in a game for three consecutive days, regardless of pitch count
- d) Warm ups on the mound for the pitcher will be no more than eight pitches. In the event of inclement weather, more warm up pitches may be thrown at the Umpires discretion.
- e) The starting pitcher may not re-enter the game as a pitcher if he/she is removed from the mound before the 85 pitches maximum.
- f) The penalty for violation of a) and c) above will result in forfeiture of the game in which the infraction occurred. The opposing Manager has 24 hours to notify the league Bronco Director if a protest is to be heard on this matter.
- g) Balks will be called. One warning per pitcher per game and on the second infraction the penalty will be enforced. The Umpire will explain the balk to both Coaches and the pitcher.
- h) The pitcher cannot throw a quick pitch. The batter must be given reasonable time to set up in the batter's box.
- i) If a pitcher is hitting batters he must be removed from the mound for that game on the third hit, regardless of the inning. This violation is at the Umpires discretion if the Batters are not trying to avoid the pitch.

THE PLAYING FIELD

- a) The playing infield will be in accordance with PONY specifications. Bases will be set at 70 feet and the pitching rubber will be set at 50 feet.
- b) The Home team is responsible for prepping the field before each game, (IF the field is not prep by the league), which includes striping foul lines and batting box, raking and watering the infield before the game. The Home team is also responsible for dragging and watering the infield at the end of the game.
- c) The Home team will always occupy the third base line dug out.
- d) The Visitor team is responsible for emptying trashcans from the dugouts and the stands after the game and maintaining the score board.

- e) The Home team is the official score keeper of the game and should record the results at the snack bar door.

TEN RUN RULE

- a) When the team batting first (the visiting team) leads by 10 or more runs at the end of the fifth or sixth inning, the game ends.
- b) When the team batting second (the home team) leads by 10 runs or more at the end of four and one-half innings, or when the Home team goes ahead by 10 runs in the bottom of the fifth or sixth innings the game ends.

EQUIPMENT

- a) No metal cleats allowed at any time. Umpires will be asked to check before each game starts.
- b) Batting helmets must be worn by the batter and all base runners.
- c) A runner who intentionally removes his/her helmet while running the base paths must return to the last base he/she reached safely with the helmet on.
- d) Catchers must wear athletic supporters, protective cups, and throat protection, when catching behind the plate.
- e) To be considered in uniform a player must have the appropriate team jersey and baseball pants. Blue jeans are not allowed. A player out of uniform cannot take the field or bat.
- f) New for 2019 Use of properly fastened protective face masks, jaw guards and chin straps on protective headgear is recommended. Altering (drilling into the helmet itself) is prohibited. ****Note, this is mainly for All-Stars and some tournaments.** If parents are going to purchase a “guard”, it may make more sense to buy the Pony Organization approved helmet at the beginning of the season rather than purchasing a helmet without a guard now but then acquiring one with the guard at the end of the season. Most Jaw guards are “after market” and can therefore require additional holes being drilled into the helmet which causes the integrity of the helmet to be questioned and must then be removed.

LENGTH OF GAMES

- a) A regular game will not go more than seven innings unless the game is tied and the two and one-half hour time limit has not elapsed. In no event, will a game exceed eight full innings. If the game is tied after eight full innings it will be recorded as a tie in the record book, subject to season total tie breaking rules.

- b) If a game is tied and the two and one-half hour time limit expires the inning under way can be completed regardless of the time, but no new inning can be started.
- c) No new inning will be started two hours and fifteen minutes after the official game start time.

PLAYING RULES

- a) A defender may not intentionally block a base or a sliding runner will be called safe.
- b) Incidental contact (base runner is out) by a runner and an opposing player will be called at the discretion of the Umpire.
- c) Head first slides into home will be an automatic out.
- d) Manager is allowed two trips to the pitcher's mound for the same pitcher. On the third instance the pitcher must be removed and cannot re-enter the game as a pitcher. A Manager is only allowed one trip to the mound per inning.
- e) Courtesy runner can only be used for an injured player, or the pitcher/ catcher in a two-out situation. The courtesy runner must be the player that made the last out.
- f) Leading off and stealing, is allowed at any time.
- g) No mandatory slide – A runner who does not slide will be called out by the umpire if there is substantial body to body contact with a player applying a tag, making a catch to apply a tag, or making a catch to make a play on another runner. The ball is dead and all runners must return to the last base touched at the time of contact. If the Umpire feels the contact was flagrant regardless if the slide rule was not in effect (throw down the line), the runner is out and ejected, the ball is dead, and all runners return to the last base touched at the time of contact. Incidental contact or obstruction and enforcement are at the Umpires discretion.
- h) Dropped Third Strike - on a dropped third strike the batter may attempt to advance to first base.
- i) Infield Fly Rule applies – discretion is given to the Umpire as to first or second base.

GAME STARTING TIME

- All games will start at the scheduled times. A team will forfeit the game if the team is unable to begin play or field at least eight players 15 minutes after the scheduled start time.

GENERAL RULES

- a) Any player or Coach intentionally throwing a bat, glove, helmet, or other equipment, using foul language, or acting in an unsportsmanlike manner will be called out and ejected from the game by the Umpire. If the player or Coach does not leave the playing field or the spectators area immediately the team will forfeit. The ejected players spot in the batting order will be an automatic out each time it comes up. This is at the Umpires discretion and no protest will be heard by the Board on this matter.
- b) A Coach or Player that is ejected is not allowed on the field or in the spectator's area for the following game. Disciplinary action against a Coach or Player may result in expulsion from the league at the discretion of the Board.
- c) Umpires should be liberal on the incidental contact rule. If a Coach pushes a player off a base to advance, then the player will be called out. If a Coach "high fives" a player on base the Umpire may issue a warning but the play will stand.
- d) If a batted ball strikes a base runner while he/she is advancing (not on base) the runner is automatically out.
- e) No person shall manage more than one team in the same age bracket.
- f) No person under the age of 18 can manage a team or conduct practice.
- g) All Head Coaches and Assistant Coaches must be certified by the Board and be subject to a background check.
- h) During the games the only persons allowed on the playing field or in the dugout besides the players are game officials, team manager, and up to two Assistant Coaches. The Umpire will issue only one warning on this violation.
- i) The use of tobacco or chewing gum on the field by players or Coaches is prohibited. Loose jewelry outside of the jersey such as chains, earrings, etc., is not allowed.
- j) All spectators are encouraged to cheer for their respective teams, and positive encouragement is the most supportive. Spectators will abide by the general conduct rules and the team Manager and Coaches will be responsible for the controlling their respective team spectators. If the spectators conduct violates general conduct rules, including harassing the opposing team at the plate or in the dugout, bringing alcohol to the field, or using foul language, the Umpire will issue one warning to the team Manager. A second incident will result in forfeiting the game. If the initial incident is serious enough in the judgment of the Umpire, there may not be a warning and the game can be called a forfeit. No protest will be heard on this matter.
- k) Toro league will take precedence over travel ball during the regular and All-Star season. Players or coaches missing more than four games during the regular season for any reason will not be eligible for All-Star selection.

- l) Umpires- Normally Bronco has one Umpire. If the Umpire does not show up then both Coaches can agree on one spectator to call balls/strikes/plays from behind the pitcher's mound, or each Coach can call his own team at bat from behind the pitcher's mound. Not playing the game is not an option.
- m) Rain Delays or Cancellation for any reason – Once a game starts, then Umpires discretion. Rain out games may not be rescheduled due to season constraints. A game must finish four innings to be considered an official game. If less than four complete innings are played, and there is no time to finish the game during the season, then the partial game will not count for either team. For example, if a game is called after four and one-half innings regardless of the reason then the score will revert to the last complete inning and the game will be official.
- n) Home and Visitors will be pre-determined on the game schedule.
- o) Names are allowed on jerseys only if all parents of the team agree and the cost is at their expense.

TIE BREAKING RULES

- a) In the event, there is an even number of games played the season record will be determined in the following order: (PCT, H2H, RD, RF, RA) Percentage as determined by Wins, Losses, and Ties; Head to Head; Run Differential; Runs For; Runs Against. If there is still a tie after these criteria are satisfied, then the teams will flip a coin for Tournament Seeds. Winner of coin toss will be the higher seed. There will not be a playoff game.
- b) In the event, there are an uneven number of games played for any reason including weather cancellations then the season record will be determined in the following order: (PCT, H2H, RD, RF, RA) Percentage as determined by Wins, Losses, and Ties; Head to Head; Run Differential; Runs For; Runs Against. If there is still a tie after these criteria are satisfied, then the teams will flip a coin for Tournament Seeds. Winner of coin toss will be the higher seed. There will not be a playoff game.