

## **TORO PONY BASEBALL**

### **MUSTANG RULES**

UPDATED: 01/31/2017

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.

#### **USE OF PLAYERS**

- a) Each player present at the game must play at least two innings in the field in every game. Except for the pitcher, players may enter or be removed from the field at any time, at the discretion of the Manager. If a player starts in 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. If a player comes into an inning under way and the inning does not finish for any reason it will not count as an inning played.
- b) Nine defensive players in the field maximum. 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.
- c) C) 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.
- d) Each player present at the game must be in the batting line up, and remain in the same order of the line up throughout the game. The continuous batting rule is in effect regardless how many players are on each team playing the game. Any team not batting or playing all their players in accordance with the rules, or using illegal players in their line up (outside of the league players, a player from another team, or a player from a different age bracket) will be in violation.
- e) The minimum two-inning defensive playing time rule will be enforced starting in the fourth inning, even if the ten-run rule applies in that inning, in the following manner: if a team ten run rules another in the fourth inning and a defensive player played only one inning, there is no violation.
- f) 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 advanced 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 score book can be recorded correctly; league Mustang Director.
- g) 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.

- h) Protests for rules violations must be made by the Coach to the league Mustang 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.
- i) Players missing practices and or games due to travel ball must inform Manager and Mustang Director in advance.

### **BATTING ORDER**

- a) A maximum of five runs are allowed in any one-half of an inning. The exception is that there is unlimited scoring in the last inning of the game, time permitting.
- b) When the fifth run crosses the plate the inning for that team is over.
- c) 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.
- d) If a player is ejected from a game for any reason their spot in the batting order is an automatic out.
- e) 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.
- f) There will be no intentional walks at any time.
- g) No on-deck batter allowed.
- h) Once all players have batted through the order once, a late arrival player cannot enter the game.

### **PITCHING RULES**

- a) No pitcher may pitch more than two innings in one game, and not more than six innings per calendar week (Monday through Sunday). Once a pitcher throws a pitch from the mound, including warm ups the inning will count as one inning pitched.
- b) A single player may not combine for more than 4 innings at the pitching and catching position in a single game.
- c) Warm ups on the mound for the pitcher will be no more than eight pitches. In the event of in climate weather more warm up pitches may be thrown at the Umpires discretion.
- d) The starting pitcher may not re-enter the game as a pitcher if he/she is removed from the mound before the two-inning maximum.
- e) The penalty for violation for a) or b) above will result in forfeiture of the game in which the infraction occurred. The opposing Manager has 24 hours to notify the league Mustang Director if a protest is to be heard on this matter.
- f) Balks will result in a warning only during the first half of the season (before full PONY rules). During the second part of the season one warning will be given and subsequent balks from the same pitcher will result in runners advancing if on base.
- g) The pitcher cannot throw a quick pitch. The batter must be given reasonable time to set up in the batter's box.
- h) If the batter steps out of the batter's box while the pitcher is in a wind up the pitch will be called a strike. A balk will not be called.
- i) If a team is scheduled for more than three games in one week then the maximum number of innings pitched for a pitcher will increase from (6) to (8), but the (2) inning maximum per game remains.

## **THE PLAYING FIELD**

- a) The playing infield will be in accordance with PONY specifications. Bases will be at 60 feet and the pitching rubber will be at 46 feet.
- b) The Home team is responsible for prepping the field, IF the league maintenance person has not prepped the field, before the game, which includes striping foul lines and batting box, raking and watering the infield before the game.
- c) The Home team will 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 scoreboard.
- e) The Home team is the official scorekeeper of the game and should record the results and bring the official scorebook back to the snack bar and send an email to the league with the game results.

## **TEN RUN RULE**

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

## **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 always.
- 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 or shorts are not allowed. A player out of uniform cannot take the field or bat.

## **LENGTH OF GAMES**

- a) A regular game will not go more than six innings unless the game is tied and the two-hour time limit has not elapsed. In no event, will a game exceed seven full innings. If the game is tied after seven full innings, it will be recorded as a tie in the record book.
- b) If a game is tied and the two-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 more than 1 hour and 50 minutes after the official game start time.

## PLAYING RULES

(Before May 1 or First half of season)

- a) Runners cannot lead off or steal until the pitched ball reaches or passes home plate. Violations of the rule (runner leaving earlier) will result in a dead ball being called and the base runner will be called back to starting base.
- b) If the catcher throws a ball back to the pitcher and the pitcher misses the ball, the ball is considered in play and runners on base may attempt to advance including home.
- c) No delayed steals - defined as a runner breaking for base when the catcher is throwing the ball back to the pitcher.
- d) If a catcher throws back to a base after the ball is pitched (attempting to pick off a steal to second or third) any runners on base may attempt to advance including home. For example, a catcher throws to second for a steal with a runner on third. The runner on third can go home.
- e) No dropped third strike. Batter is out.

(After May 1st or second half of season)

- a) Full PONY rules apply.
- b) Leading off and stealing is allowed. But, stealing home is allowed only, if the ball is put in play. A past ball does not constitute "in -play" 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.
- c) On dropped third strike the batter may attempt to advance to first base.
- d) One warning will be given for a balk on the same pitcher. On the second warning the runners advance.

(Entire Regular Season)

- a) Incidental contact (base runner is out) by a runner and an opposing player will be called at the discretion of the Umpire.
- b) Head first slides into home will be an automatic out.
- c) 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 per pitcher.
- d) 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.
- e) Infield fly rule applies- discretion is given to the Umpire as to first or second base.
- f) A defending player may not intentionally block a base or a sliding runner will be called safe due to obstruction.
- 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) No Breaking Balls. - 1st in-Game Offense: Umpire will issue a BENCH WARNING to each team. 2nd in-Game Offense: the violating Pitcher will be removed from the Game. 3rd in-Game Offense, the Manager and violating Pitcher will be removed from the Game and Subject to further reprimand by the Toro Pony Board. Change-ups are allowed.
- i) Stealing home is not allowed unless there is an overthrow back to the pitcher.

### **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 12 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 like 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 spectator's area immediately the team will forfeit. The ejected players spot in the batting order will be an automatic out each time it comes up. 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 may result in expulsion form 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 in this matter.

- k) Umpires will be lenient on the strike zone. The objective is to encourage the batter to swing rather than wait for a walk.
- l) 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.
- m) Umpires- Normally Mustang 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.
- n) 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 be official.
- o) Home and Visitors will be pre-determined on the game schedule.

#### **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.