**LCYO Pinto Division Rules
Updated 2/27/2018**

LCYO’s Pinto Division will follow the rules set forth by Pony Baseball for the Pinto Division with the following exceptions and modifications:

1) The LCYO “Code of Conduct” is to be followed at all times. Managers and coaches are to follow and enforce these rules at all times.

2) All players available must be on the regular batting lineup for the entire game. A player arriving late will be placed at the end of the batting order. The child or the parent cannot waive this rule.

3) Each player must play at least four innings defensively in a game that goes a full six innings and shall not rest in consecutive innings. No player shall sit two innings, until each player has sat at least one inning. No player may play more than two innings at any one position per game besides 1st base. A player is allowed 3 innings at 1st base per game. Catcher may play 3 innings with full gear (including protective cup). Catchers not in full gear must be at the back of the batter for safety reasons and fairness to the batter. Each player must play at least one inning of outfield.

4) Each team should have a minimum of eight players to start the game. If a team does not have eight players, the game will be considered a forfeit but should still be played for practice and enjoyment of the players. If necessary, the game should be played by one team lending a player to the other team. If a team has only eight players, it is acceptable to play without a catcher. A parent shall return missed pitches to the pitching machine feeder. In this case, an infielder may cover home for the short team. If a team has nine players, they must field a catcher.

5) A thrown ball is dead the moment it goes “out of play.” The ball is out of play when it crosses the imaginary line extended toward the outfield from the dugout fence. The runner(s) shall advance two bases from the time the ball was thrown. Please note the emphasis on “when the ball is thrown.” If a runner is between first and second base at the time the wild throw is made the runner shall be awarded third base regardless of whether the runner was running toward second base or returning to first base.

6) Both teams will have a parent or other observer keep score. The Home team is the “official Scorekeeper.” To minimize disputes, each team should verify the score with each other after each half inning. Scores should be loaded onto the team page by the Manager of the winning team.

7) Regulation games are to be six innings with no inning (i.e. top of inning) to begin more than 1 hour, 45 minutes after the start of the game. Four innings (or 3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead) constitutes a complete game. If the home team is ahead after 5 ½ innings, the visiting team has the option whether or not the bottom of the 6th inning will be played. There can be ties in the regular season. Tie-breaker rules will be used for postseason games.

8) Each half inning will end when the fielding team records three outs or five runs are scored by the batting team, whichever comes first. However, even if the 5th run scores, the play still should be completed, but the runs after five do not count.

9) A batter will bat until he hits either a fair ball or has received a total of six ‘hittable’ pitches. A 6th pitch that is foul is not counted. The batter may continue to foul off pitches until he misses the ball or hits a fair ball. If a pitch is “un-hittable” in the judgment of either umpire, it shall not count, even if the player swings at it. A batter hit by a pitch is a dead ball and deemed unhittable.

10) Effective January 1, 2018, with the exception of -3 (BBCOR certified), all other 2 1/4" and 2 5/8" barrel bats with a minus factor of (-5, -7, -9, etc.), must be USABat certified with the USABat licensing stamp on the bat in order to be used for league and tournament play. All 2 1/4" and 2 5/8" minus factor bats -5, -7, -9, etc. used in 2017 with the USSSA 1.15 BPF stamp will be illegal to use in 2018.

11) There will be no base stealing allowed. The runner cannot break contact with the base until the ball has made contact with the bat. If the runner leaves early, the umpire will give the runner a warning. A second violation by the same runner will result in the runner being called out. If the ball is hit and the runner leaves early, the runner is out.

12) To start play, the defensive fielding pitcher must have one foot within a 10-foot diameter circle around the pitching machine. He must maintain this position until the ball is hit. The pitcher is not allowed to set up in front of an imaginary line that is perpendicular to the path of a pitched ball and runs through the wheel of the machine.

13) The league has a “slide to avoid contact” rule. A runner who intentionally collides with a fielder will be out. Fielders must stay out of the base path and stay off of the base unless they are making a play on the ball. If a runner is blocked or hindered they may be called safe or awarded the next base.

14) Bunting is not allowed. The first time a batter tries to bunt, it will be counted as a strike and he will be warned. If the same batter has a second violation in the same game, the batter will be declared out. Some allowance shall be made for weaker hitters who take a half swing to make contact with the ball if it is obviously not a bunt attempt. Coaches should work with these players to develop a full swing.

15) Each team will have a maximum of 10 players on the field in defensive positions. The normal positions will be fielded, with the 10th player used as a 4th outfielder. Outfielders can be no closer than 50 feet from the baseline when the ball is hit. An easy way to determine this is to have them all line up ‘half way’ between where the infield dirt ends, and the outfield fences. Additionally, outfielders must make a throw to record an out, and may not run to a base for a force play. Unless there is an injury, it is not permissible to switch players from their defensive positions in the middle of an inning. For plays at home plate, the catcher shall be the primary defensive player to make the play. Another infielder or pitcher may back the catcher up, but not step in front of the catcher to make the play. If this occurs, the runner shall be declared safe.

16) The defensive team, including parents, shall not heckle, chatter, or direct any comments toward the batter (e.g. “hey batter-batter” is not permitted). The defensive team shall be given one warning. If a second occurrence takes place, the batter shall finish his at bat and be awarded first base if he was otherwise put out.

**17) Each player must play at least two of the first five innings at an “infield position.” Each player must play at least one of the first five innings at an “outfield position”. Each player may not play more than 4 innings of infield.** **The coach and the parents may only waive this rule after consultation and concurrence by League Director prior to each game. The infield positions are P, 1B, 2B, 3B, and SS. The outfield positions are LF, LCF, RCF, RF.**

18) It is permissible to coach fielders from foul territory beyond first and third bases. Coaches are not allowed on the field during play except for the pitching machine feeders.

19) Infielders may not start play any closer to the batter than 5 feet inside the baseline. The intent of this is to ensure fairness to the weaker batters.

20) Both teams shall provide a volunteer umpire. The home team’s umpire will call plays at first base and home as well as fair and foul balls down the first base line. The first base umpire shall be responsible for the “pitch count.” The visitor team’s umpire will call plays at second and third bases, and fair and foul balls down the third base line. If one team cannot provide an umpire, the other team may provide both or the managers can agree to use only one umpire. If neither team can provide an umpire, then the base coaches will umpire during the game.

21) Umpires must make all calls based on the rules of baseball and those contained herein. The umpires shall remain impartial on all no matter what the circumstances of the game. There shall be no arguing of judgment calls made by the umpires. If a manager believes that an umpire has misinterpreted a rule, he shall immediately call time out and calmly ask for a meeting with the umpire and the opposing manager. After this meeting, the decision of the umpires with respect to any rule interpretation is final. If the umpires disagree, the home team’s umpire will make the final decision.

22) The Pinto Division will use a pitching machine that will be set at 40 miles per hour at a distance of 38 feet. If a batted ball hits the pitching machine, the ball is live and in play unless the ball goes into foul territory, at which time the play is dead and runners go to the bases they were clearly advancing to. For example, if, after the machine is hit and the ball goes foul, the batter has not yet reached first base he is awarded first base, and, if a runner is running toward third base he is awarded third base (even if he is not half-way there). The pitching machine is considered part of the ground; therefore, if the ball hits the pitching machine, it cannot be caught as a “fly out’ or “pop out.”

23) An adult pitching machine “feeder” will operate the pitching machine. The batting team will designate one parent to be the feeder, however, if one team is “short”, the same parent can be a feeder for both teams. The feeder will also be the person to whom infielders throw the ball to once the play is concluded. He must catch the ball when it is thrown back at him by an infielder. Outfielders are to throw the ball to an infielder that then can return the ball to the feeder. If an outfielder throws the ball directly to the feeder, he should not catch it and the ball is still live, until the play is properly concluded. The feeder is part of the playing field and the ball is live after it unintentionally hits the feeder. Rule 22 above shall govern balls hitting the feeder and going out of play. However, the feeder shall not deliberately interfere with any hit or thrown ball unless it is an infielder throwing the ball to the feeder to complete the play. If the feeder should deliberately interfere with a hit ball, the batter shall be declared out. If the feeder deliberately interferes with a thrown ball from an infielder or an outfielder, other than a throw back to the feeder to complete a play, then the lead runner shall be declared out. The feeder shall get one warning for catching a ball from an outfielder. A feeder may offer hitting instruction to a batter during the game (such as where to stand in the box, etc.) and instruction to runners while the ball is dead. However, the feeder shall not coach runners while the ball is in play. The feeder shall receive one warning during a game. The second occurrence will result in the lead runner being called out.

24) When the ball is in the possession of an infielder on the infield dirt, and the infielder makes no further play on a runner, then the ball is dead. If a runner advancing to the next base is at least halfway to the base (players full body past the halfway line, not just hand or foot), then he may continue to that base, otherwise he must return to the preceding base. If it is unclear if the player was past the line before time play is stopped, benefit shall be given to the fielder and the runner shall return to the preceding base. If the umpire has not called time out, an infielder with control of the ball has the choice of making a play on any advancing runner. If he does, then the ball is still live and the play continues until controlled by another infielder. Any throw back to the feeder or in the general direction of the feeder by an infielder is not considered a play on the runner and the ball shall be considered dead at the time the infielder has possession of the ball in the dirt infield. Please note it is against the spirit of this rule for a runner to deliberately try and draw a throw from a fielder by advancing to a base in a situation that would not normally call for it. The umpires must use judgment in making this ruling. When in doubt, benefit should be given to the fielder.

25) Teams will share responsibility for setting up the field before a game, and breaking it down after the game. Duties shall be as follows:

**Before Game:**

Away Team: Drag and water Infield, Chalk base lines, setup Pitching Machine and Bases

Home Team: Set up Fences: Left and Right Field at 150 ft, Center 175 ft from Home Plate.

**After Game:**

Home Team: Bring in Pitching Machine and Bases, Verify Equipment in Locker, Lock Up

Away Team: Put away Fences

26. Infield practice before the game will be evenly divided as follows: The Away team may take infield for 10 minutes, starting 20 minutes before the game. The Home team may take infield for 10 minutes, starting 10 minutes before the game. If preceding games do not allow 20 minutes of infield practice the remaining time will be evenly divided amongst the Away and Home teams.