



MUSTANG DIVISION GUIDELINES

The following guidelines are for use during Mustang League play and, when applicable, are a supplement to the Official Baseball Rules, PONY Baseball Rules and SMYB By-laws utilized in the league. All play shall be governed by the current year PONY Baseball rules, the SMYB By-laws and these SMYB Mustang Division Guidelines.

Current PONY Rules can be downloaded here:

<https://ponybbsb.freshdesk.com/en/support/solutions/articles/27000070416-baseball-rulebook>

Any violation of the SMYB By-Laws, Division Guidelines or PONY Rules may result in a forfeit of the game and/or the suspension of a player, manager, coach, umpire, or any other person for such period as shall be deemed appropriate by the Board.

Games will be played at Mission Sports Park. The Home team will occupy the 3rd base dugout; the visiting team will be in the 1st base dugout.

Field Prep & Takedown: Home team is responsible for all field prep & takedown (after the final game of the day). The home team shall chalk foul lines & batter's boxes, install bases, rake/drag field and batter's box as needed. The home team is also responsible to put bases away and make sure the field is left in good condition, with all trash thrown away (no trash left behind in dugouts or on the field).

Only SMYB approved managers and coaches will be allowed on the field during practices and games. The team manager is solely responsible for ensuring that each assistant coach registers as a volunteer through the league, completes a background check, and that they are approved by the division director or SMYB Board prior to being on the field.

1. Junior (Youth) Umpires will be used. Managers and coaches should be aware of the following:
 - a. Any umpire's decision which involves judgment, such as, but not limited to, whether a batted ball is fair or foul, whether a pitch is a strike or ball, or whether a runner is safe or out, is final. No player, manager, coach or substitute shall object to any such judgment decisions. (Official Baseball Rule 9.02(a)).
 - b. Each umpire has the authority to rule on any point not specifically covered in the rules. (Official Baseball Rule 9.01(c)).
 - c. Each umpire has the authority to disqualify a player, coach, manager, or substitute for objecting to a decision or for unsportsmanlike conduct or language, and to eject such disqualified person from the playing field. If an umpire disqualifies a player while a play is in progress, the disqualification shall not take effect until no further action is possible in that play. (Official Baseball Rule 9.01 (d)).
2. A "Slide or avoid" rule shall be enforced. The rule is: In all instances where it is apparent a defensive player is protecting a base and is in possession of a live ball and is attempting to tag out (or force out) an advancing runner at that base, the runner shall slide if he chooses to continue his advance. Base runners shall not intentionally attempt to dislodge a live ball from the possession of a defensive player attempting to make an out on the player advancing to that base by use of physical force while not in the process of sliding. Base runners shall not run into, strike or attempt to knock them down. If the base runner chooses not to slide he must



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avoid contact with the defensive player in possession of the ball, or if allowed, return to the previous base.

PENALTY: In the event a base runner fails to "Slide or avoid" in a situation as described above, he or she shall be declared out.

3. Catchers, or another defensive player covering any base, may not intentionally block the base or base path unless they are in possession of a live ball, or in the immediate process of receiving a live ball being thrown to them to immediately attempt to tag out an advancing runner.

PENALTY: In the event a defensive player commits the above-described action, he or she shall be declared to have committed obstruction and the advancing runner allowed to advance.

4. RULE DEVIATIONS FROM RULEBOOK

- a. Teams in the Mustang Division shall lead-off and steal bases pursuant to official Baseball Rules, with the exception of stealing Home from 3rd base. Runners may not advance directly from 3rd base to home plate unless they are either batted in or forced home via a base on balls or a hit batter. This is to include runners who steal 3rd base from 2nd base or advancing to 3rd base on a steal of 2nd base from 1st base. Any runner who steals home without being tagged out between 3rd base and home plate will be directed to return to 3rd base and any runners who advanced to 3rd base will return to 2nd base, etc. During plays where the runners are advancing on a batted ball, the runners may continue advancing until the Umpire has declared the current play dead. At that time, the prohibited stealing of home rule will be in effect. **NOTE:** If a player attempts to advance home when prohibited, the player and play is live and the player can be tagged out until he or she either returns to 3rd base safely, or touches home plate safely.
- b. Mustang games will be played with no "Dropped Third Strike Rule." Batters shall not be allowed to advance to first base on a dropped third strike.
- c. Mustang games will have a 5-run rule for regular season games. During playoffs, all games will follow tournament play rules.
- d. PONY Rule 9-R (one-foot in batter's box rule) will not be enforced.
- e. Throwing any equipment will not be tolerated. First time the player will be warned. Second time the player will be called out.

5. GAME GUIDELINES:

- a. A team must have at least 8 players, in proper uniform, to start a game. After a game has started, a team may finish the game with less than 8 players.
- b. Game time limits: No new inning may begin after 1 hour 35 minutes and will have a hard stop at 1 hour 50 minutes. A new inning begins at the time the 3rd out of the previous inning is made. There is no "grace" period while the teams take the field or a pitcher warms up. If, for example, the 3rd out of the bottom of an inning is made at 2:03 p.m., the top of the following inning begins at the same time.



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- c. If a game is tied at the end of the sixth inning and the time limit specified in paragraph "b" has not been reached, an additional inning(s) may be played; however, no new inning may start after the time limit has expired. Games that are tied at the completion of the time limit will be recorded as tie games.
 - d. No player shall be removed from a game mid-inning by the manager or coach and replaced by a player from the bench unless it is due to injury, illness or disciplinary reasons. Once a player is designated as sitting during an inning he must sit the entire inning (3 defensive outs) unless needed to replace a player due to injury, illness or disciplinary reasons.
 - e. All players present for a game shall play unless unable to play due to illness, injury, or suspension pursuant to the most recent By-laws. Games will include free defensive substitution and full-roster batting in an established batting order. Managers shall provide the opposing manager with a line-up card listing the players present and their batting order prior to the beginning of each game. No player may sit-out more than one consecutive defensive innings, unless injured or ill. Each player shall sit out 1 inning prior to any player sitting a 2nd inning, and each player shall have sat 2 innings prior to any player sitting a 3rd inning. Each player must also play a minimum of 3 defensive innings. In the event a player is unable to play due to injury or illness, it shall be documented in the Official Scoring Book.
 - f. No player may play in games if they have any type of cast due to previous injury.
 - g. Umpires shall allow a maximum of 90 seconds in between innings. Coaches are expected to have players ready to take the field after the 3rd out of an inning occurs. If catchers are unavailable to warm up pitchers, a coach should do so to allow the pitcher 4-6 pitches prior to the start of an inning.
 - h. Mercy Rule: There will be no mercy rule during regular season games.
6. EQUIPMENT
- a. Only bats bearing the USA Baseball logo will be permitted for use in games. The umpire will make the determination if a bat is illegal and must be removed from play. If the Umpire is uncertain, the bat will be removed from play and then evaluated by the Division Director and Umpire Director. If the bat is removed from play, the player and manager may stay in the game but the player must use an approved bat. The Division Director and Umpire Director will be notified and the incident will be noted. If the bat in question is returned to a game setting and removed a 2nd time, the manager is subject to the conduct committee.
7. PLAYOFFS
- a. Run Rule: There shall be no 5 run rule per inning in playoffs; all innings are open without a limit on runs scored.
 - b. Mercy Rule: A game will be determined to be over if a team has a lead of the following runs by inning: 10 runs after 4 innings, 8 runs after 5 innings.
 - c. Time Limit: With the exception of championship games, playoff games will follow the same time limits as stated in Section 5(b). There shall be no time limit on championship games. The game will be complete after 6 innings or when one team wins due to the mercy rule as described in section 5(h). If after 6 innings the game remains a tie, additional innings will be



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played using tie breaker innings with a runner beginning on 2nd base and 0 outs. This will continue until a team wins.

8. MUSTANG PITCHING RULES (for League Play) Reference PONY BASEBALL RULE 10
 - a. **A pitch count limit of 50 pitches or 2 innings (whichever occurs first) for pitcher per game is allowed for the Mustang Division. The official scorekeeper shall keep the official pitch count,** but Managers are encouraged to keep pitch counts and verify them at the end of each half inning with the official scorekeeper. If a pitch count is reached during an at bat, the Pitcher will be permitted to complete pitching to that specific batter. A Pitcher cannot pitch again for a period of 40 hours from the official start time of any game when said Pitcher has thrown more than 33 pitches (two-thirds) of their allotted pitch count.
 - b. Pitchers, when pitching in more than one game on the same calendar day, may pitch any combination of innings in those games, provided they do not pitch in more than **TWO innings or 50 pitches.**
 - c. Pitchers shall not be allowed to pitch in more than 4 innings in one calendar week. A calendar week is from 12:01 a.m. Monday to 12 midnight the following Sunday.
 - d. **As soon as a pitcher delivers one pitch to a batter, that pitcher shall be considered as having pitched one inning.**
 - e. A pitcher is charged the number innings pitched in the specific calendar day or week in which they are pitched, regardless of whether they are local league games, the playoff of postponed games or suspended games, tie games, or exhibition games.
 - f. Neither a starting pitcher that has been withdrawn from the line up, nor a pitcher who is withdrawn from the mound but who stays in the game at another position shall be permitted to pitch again in the same game.
 - g. If a relief pitcher comes in "cold" the umpire shall allow the pitcher to warm up properly with at least ten warm-up pitches.
 - h. Pitchers in violation of any of the pitching rules shall be considered ineligible players, subject to the penalties outlined in the section on Penalties.
 - i. The Pitcher will be replaced immediately following a third hit batter in any one game appearance. There are no exceptions to this rule and it will be enforced by the umpire.
 - j. INTENTIONAL WALKS: An intentional walk will count as 4 pitches towards the pitcher's pitch count.
 - k. Pitchers who balk will be given warnings. No balks will be enforced

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

1. FIELD DISTANCES:
 - a. Bases: 60 feet
 - b. Home Plate to second: 84 feet 10 inches
 - c. Pitching Distance: 48 feet front of pitching rubber to back tip of home plate