

SHETLAND LEAGUE BYLAWS

1. RULES AND REGULATIONS

Official Pony Softball Rules and Regulations and Official Softball Rules published by Sporting News shall govern league play except where amended by the Youngsville Recreational Sports Programs.

2. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The Youngsville Recreational Sports Programs shall reserve the right to withdraw privileges from any player, umpire, fan or adult volunteer whose conduct, on or off the playing field, reflects in a manner that is detrimental to the best interest of the Youngsville Sports Recreational Program and the youth of the City of Youngsville. The reputation of PONY in your community can be drastically injured by the actions of one or more of a small group of persons, on or off the playing field. A player, parent, manager, coach, fan, umpire and league official all bear the responsibility of upholding the good name of the program. Public quarreling and bickering, whether over playing field situations or league administrative problems, only serve to weaken the entire organization in the community. This is a youth program designed to benefit young people. Much of the benefit they derive from stems from the example set by the adult leaders. Be sure it is a good example.

It is mandatory if a player, parent, manager, fan, head coach, assistant coach, umpire, league official or volunteer are thrown out of the game; you must serve a one game suspension. The coach must serve his/her one game suspension away from the ball park. During his/her suspension game the coach can not be at the ball park which includes: field, dugout, parking lot, stands, etc. Any suspended coach violating this rule will be dismissed from the league for the remainder of the current year with a possibility of being barred from future participation in the league, permanently, or for a specific number of years. If a suspended coach is a coach in another league he/she will not be allowed to coach or be at the Youngsville Sports Complex for their other game until the one game suspension has been served. If you are thrown out of two games in the same calendar year, you will be barred from future participation in the league. All head coaches are responsible for the conduct of their assistant coaches and fans. The actions of an assistant coach are a gross reflection of a head coach's inability to control his team and the head coach will be held responsible. All coaches will be issued an Official Pony League rulebook. A copy of Sporting News Official Rule will be kept at both concessions stands for use by all leagues.

The following will be adopted by the league as a guide for the handling of player or adult discipline problems:

- A. The Director shall have the authority to suspend, discharge or otherwise discipline any player, manager, coach, umpire, fan league officer or other person whose conduct is in violation of the Rules and Regulations of PONY Softball and the league and/or is considered detrimental to the best interests for the league.
 - (1) Persons subject to such discipline shall have the right to a hearing before the Director before such discipline is imposed.
 - (2) In the event of discipline procedures involving a player, or other person under the age of 18, that person's parents shall be invited to attend the hearing with the person concerned.
- B. Persons, youth or adult, who refuse to comply with the rules of Softball, PONY softball, or the League, may be considered for disciplinary action.
- C. Recognizing the difficulty of establishing specific penalties for a variety of violations of acceptable conduct, the following penalties are suggested. The Director may impose the one which, in their opinion, appears to match the severity of the offense.
 - (1) Warning. The offending person is to be advised, in writing, of the offense, and further advised that repetition of the offense will result in a more severe penalty.
 - (2) Suspension. The offending person is to be advised in writing that he or she has been suspended from all league activity for a specific number of games, or days.
 - (3) Dismissal. The offending person is to be advised in writing that he or she has been dismissed from the league for the remainder of the current year.
 - (4) Barred. The offending person is to be advised in writing that he or she has been barred from present and future participation in the league, permanently, or for a specific number of years.

Play is governed by Official Baseball Rules: "The Sporting News" edition. This book does not contain a complete set of rules governing play in Shetland League. This book contains only those exceptions to Official Baseball Rules which are necessary in a youth program, as well as regulations governing league organization and administration.

3. TEAMS (AGE)

Age, for the league purposes, means "league age," which is that age attained by a player on January 1 of the season in question.

4. SELECTION OF COACHES

All head coaches will be selected yearly by the director. An assistant coach will not automatically become the head coach the following year. All coaching selections whether head or assistant must be re-appointed and approved each year.

5. PLAYING FIELDS

Distance between bases: 55 feet

Pitching distance: 40 feet

6. EQUIPMENT

Conventional baseball uniforms required in league AND TOURNAMENT PLAY include a shirt, pants, cap, and socks as used by teams in the Major Leagues, and shall be worn by all players. All players must wear their shirts tucked in the pants. Hats must be worn properly with the brim in the front.

Rubber soled or rubber cleated shoes are permitted. Metal spikes are **not** allowed.

PROTECTIVE HELMETS: Must be worn at all times when batting, running the bases, or on-deck hitters. A runner who intentionally discards his/her helmet while running the bases shall be removed from the game at the completion of the play. No out will be called.

The batter, players in the on-deck batting area and baserunners are required to wear protective headgear which gives protection to the top of the head, temples, ears and base of the skull. Headgear shall be NOCSAE approved. Any headgear in violation of this rule, shall be removed from play.

No jewelry shall be worn by any player, except for medical identification.

All coaches will sign out equipment at the beginning of the season. All equipment shall be returned immediately after the end of the season, clean and ready for storage.

7. PLAYING RULES

The half inning will be complete at either 5 runs, or 3 outs. (6th inning is open)

On an overthrow to 1st base, all players may only advance one base at their own risk. If they reach safely they must stop at bag.

All players are to be used defensively: the outfielders must play behind the baseline or on the outfield grass. There must be 6 infielders, everyone else in the outfield, rotating each inning.

A player shall not remain on the bench.

Batting order shall be changed every game to insure each player gets an equal number of at bats.

The pitcher shall remain in the arc inscribed around the pitcher's rubber until ball is hit by the batter.

Batters are not permitted to bunt or swing easy at the ball. PENALTY: Ball is dead and swing counts.

A 10-foot arc to be inscribed in front of home plate. Batted ball must reach or go past the line to be in play, otherwise a foul ball.

The batting tee will be placed on home plate. The umpire is responsible for removal prior to any play at home plate.

A batter shall be declared out after failing to hit a fair ball after five swings at the ball on the tee. If fifth swing is a foul ball batter stays alive.

TIGHT BASES: Base runners shall remain in contact with the base until ball is hit or ball crosses home plate. Runner is out and ball is in play if ball is hit. If ball is not hit runner must return to base and ball is dead.

No infield fly rule.

Once an infielder has possession of the ball in the infield, the player must request time from the umpire.

Free substitution on defense.

Entire roster of players present for the game shall bat in rotation.

One offensive time out per half inning.

One defensive time out per half inning.

Each team must have eight eligible players, physically able to play.

Two defensive coaches to be used in league play. Two offensive coaches to be used in league play. Coaches/Umpires will be allowed to assist batters in the batter's box, and/or adjust the batting tee.

8. PITCHING RULES

SHETLAND: Players are not permitted to pitch. The pitcher is required to make the “pitching motion” prior to the batter swinging.

9. LENGTH OF GAMES

TIME LIMIT: We will play six innings. No new inning may be started under five minutes of the one hour and fifteen-minute time limit. Any innings started before time limit must be finished before game is called off. (A new inning starts as soon as the current inning ends, this will prevent unnecessary delays by a team attempting to end a game prematurely).

10. SCHEDULE

Scheduling and rescheduling of games shall be the responsibility of the director.

MAKE-UP GAMES: We will attempt to make-up all scheduled games.

11. UMPIRES

There will be one umpire behind the plate.

12. SCOREKEEPERS

The home team will be responsible for keeping the book. There will be no official standings for the Shetland leagues, but a book will be required to keep track of runs, outs, and batting order.

13. MANAGERS AND COACHES

A coach wishing to consult with an umpire shall request time out and approach the umpire in a gentlemanly manner. If this procedure is followed the umpire is required to answer all questions. Managers have a one-minute period in which to discuss a rule interpretation.

Each team will pick up trash on their side of the field after each game.

Teams and coaches are **required** to congratulate each other on the field after each game.

Adult coaches only may be used in either or both the first and third base coaching boxes. Only players in baseball uniforms shall be used as base coaches when adult coaches are not used.

A coach or coaches shall not switch coaching boxes during an inning.

The use of tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs in any form by players or adult leaders in the dug out, on the benches or on the playing field shall not be permitted.

14. PENALTIES

Players who intentionally, in the judgment of the umpire, throw bats or protective headgear, or discard protective headgear while batting or running the bases, shall be ejected from the game following completion of any play in progress at the time the violation occurs. Such action does not constitute an out and such players shall be replaced as batters or base runners if appropriate.

Penalty for use of illegal players shall be forfeiture of games in which illegal players participated, provided such games are protested by any of the league coaches or league presidents in writing within forty-eight hours of the game or games in question.

15. PROTESTS

All umpire decisions and judgements will be final and no protest will be allowed. All games will be final.

16. GENERAL CONDUCT

The umpire will grade the coach's conduct during a game and turn in his comments to the Youngsville Sports Complex and kept on file by the Director.

17. ALL-STAR CONDUCT

PONY Baseball, Inc. through its headquarters staff and its designated Field Directors, shall reserve the right to withdraw membership from any league, team, player or adult volunteer whose conduct, on or off the playing field, reflects in a manner that is detrimental to the best interests of PONY Baseball, Inc.

Players or adult volunteers who engage in unsportsmanlike conduct, such as fighting, abusive language or similarly derogatory activity, may be suspended for one or more games.

18. ALL-STARS

SELECTION OF TEAMS:

The all-star team shall be composed of a head coach, an assistant coach, and a business manager with a minimum of 12 players. Area high school baseball coaches will conduct the All-Star tryouts independently and provide YSC with recommendations as to who should be named to the All-Star teams. League coaches will not be involved in the independent tryouts.

League coaches will complete a ballot that will include their recommended All-Star teams in their league. League coach's ballots will help provide support for players who are not able to attend the tryouts or may have a bad day at the tryouts. League coach's ballots and independent tryout ballots will be compiled by YSC, and final All-Star teams will be selected by YSC.

SELECTION OF COACH:

The procedure for selecting the all-star team head coach shall be as follows:

- A. To be eligible for selection as a head coach in the Youngsville Recreational Sports Programs, a candidate will be chosen by the Youngsville Sports Complex based on the following considerations:
 1. Coaches code of conduct
 2. Baseball knowledge
 3. Coaching ability
 4. League standing

19. COACHES, JUST LET THE KIDS PLAY:

When you organize a youth sports program, when you sign up your child, or when you watch him or her at practices or at games, continually ask yourself a question: Is this program, practice or game primarily serving the needs of the children in this age group-all the children-or is it primarily serving the needs of the adults? Your answer to that question will guide you toward making good choices in the best interest of your children.

If winning is not the children's top priority-and they have told us time and again that it is not-then making choices about which children play and which children do not play based on how best to win the most games does not serve primarily the children's wants. It serves primarily the adults' wants.

Kids want to have fun-that is their top priority. If all the drills, all the yelling and screaming from the sidelines and the pressure-packed schedules ruin the fun, the adults have missed the mark.

Kids want to play. They don't want to sit and watch other kids play or watch adults coach. If you are making choices that keep kids on the bench, you are making choices that do not serve the wants, the needs and the rights of all the children, rather than just a select few.

Kids deserve the chance to succeed. If you are intent on identifying "talent" at an early age, selecting elite teams and discouraging those who are cut, you are damaging what is every child's right to have a chance to succeed. You are doing it for no good reason because until children are more fully developed, their "talent" should not be and cannot be accurately evaluated.

Kids learn best by doing, not just by listening, and they learn by being spontaneous, creative and by taking chances. Thus, practices and games do not serve children's needs if they discourage those natural instincts and create fears about making mistakes.

Kids need time to relax, time for their bodies to recharge, time for their minds to wander. Kids need to daydream now and then. They need a day off. If their youth sports schedules overexert their bodies, overtax their energies and rob them of their free time, those schedules are not meeting children's needs. You see the point. You see the pattern. So much of what adults create in the name of youth sports violate the very nature of being a child, the natural wants and need of children.

So please adhere to the Youngsville Recreational Sports Programs philosophy

JUST LET THE KIDS PLAY!