



2009 Boys – Pony Guidelines

Revised April, 2009

Statement from the Pony Board pertaining to the intent of these rules...

The spirit of these rules is to encourage a safe and fun environment for our children to play baseball. As discussed in the Positive Coaching Alliance seminar, we recognize that winning is important; however, teaching our children is more important. Our hope is that you choose to take this approach. Please teach your players to be respectful, to be safe, and to learn baseball fundamentals. If you do this, we are certain that the 2009 Pony season will be enjoyable.

1) LEAGUE SEASON

The league season will begin on April 21, 2009 and will continue until the playoffs are concluded. The regular season will consist of a maximum of 20 games. Although the majority of games will be played on the weekend, there will also be games scheduled during the week.

2) PRACTICE

All team practices may officially occur on or after March 30, 2009.

3) RAIN-OUTS

Due to the increased number of games and the tight scheduling of fields, there will be no makeup of rainout games. If a game is called due to rain, the rules pertaining to “regulation game” will apply.

4) PLAYOFFS

All teams will qualify for the playoffs. Playoffs will be seeded based on the regular season standings. The Pony Board reserves the right to change the seeding format during the season to a reverse draft random seeding structure (same as the younger leagues) to promote development over competition. If there are concerns about following pitch counts, a change is likely. Coaches will be notified if there is a change to the seeding format.



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The format will depend on the number of teams each the division (American and National). The playoffs will use a double elimination format within each division. During the playoffs, the home team will be determined by a coin flip. The champion for the division will be the playoff winner. If possible, the two division winners will play each other for one final “World Series” game. Special playoff rules will be published separately if needed. Playoffs will start around the middle of June after the regular season is over. If there are not enough Pony teams, the playoff format may change.

For 2009, it has been decided to format the playoffs the same as the lower leagues. There will not be an American and National bracket format; all the teams will be in one bracket. We will seed the bracket is the reverse of the draft order.

5) USE OF PLAYERS

- a. All players on a team’s roster must play. A player arriving after the game begins is added to the end of the order. The opposing manager must be notified.
- b. All players must play a minimum of three innings in the field and one time in the infield by the fourth inning. In official games shortened due to weather, time limit, or darkness, this rule will then not apply.
- c. A player cannot be on the bench twice until everyone has been on the bench at least once. A player cannot be on the bench three times until all the players have sat twice. Starting pitchers are excluded from this rule, as long as they remain pitching (and NOT exceeding the pitch count). No player will sit two consecutive innings. Any pitcher who enters the game in the 1st inning shall be considered the “starter” relative to this rule and if they were on the bench and came in, then they would **not** be considered having been on the bench for that inning.



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- d. Any manager not abiding by these rules is subject to an official “warning” by the league. All such warnings will be noted on the Official Game Record for that game. Warnings will be maintained by the league commissioner. A second warning to this rule will result in an automatic suspension of the manager for the next game. A third warning will result in a managerial suspension for the rest of the current season and a managerial and/or coaching disqualification for the next season. Managers and coaches are encouraged to report clear violations to the league officials.
- e. Any/all Official Game Records are available for inspection by all of the managers and coaches.
- f. At the conclusion of the season, all such warnings will be turned over to the Pony Board.

6. REPLACEMENTS

- a. If a team loses a player for the season, the manager must notify the Pony Board. BYB&S, at its discretion, will provide a substitute player for the remainder of the season.
- b. If less than 9 players are available for a game, the Pony team can pull from any team within the Major Division.
- c. A substitute player must play. A substitute player must bat last and can only play in the outfield.
- d. If a rostered player shows up late to the game, and a substitute player is playing, the substitute can remain in the game and play for the duration of the game if he wishes to play. The substitute player(s) will remain in the batting order in his designated spot. The late arriving roster player(s) will be added to the bottom of the order. If a rostered player shows up before the start of the game and there are 9 rostered players available, then the substitute will not play.



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- e. Replacement players cannot be used if their House Team is playing at the same time. This would be considered an illegal player and would result in a forfeit for the team violating this rule.

7. BASE RUNNING

- a. A Pinch runner shall be used if the catcher is on base with 2 outs. The courtesy runner shall be the preceding out.
- b. Leadoffs are allowed. The length between the bases for Pony should be 80 feet.
- c. Stealing 2nd, 3rd and home is allowed. Please note that a steal home must be delayed (no straight steal of home).

8. BATTING

- a. All players on a team's roster will bat in consecutive order. The number of players present will determine the length of the individual team's batting order. Batters will bat in their assigned position, regardless of whether or not they have played defensively in that inning. If a player is added to the batting order after the game has begun, he/she must be placed at the bottom of the order. Likewise, if a player must leave the game for any reason, that spot shall be vacated and all other batters below shall be moved up one position.
- b. If a player leaves the game for any reason and the team is left with only eight players, his/her absence will not be counted as an "out".
- c. All batters must wear an approved batting helmet at all times when they are out of the dugout. This includes the time approaching the plate, the full time at bat, time spent on the bases or in the baselines, and returning to the dugout. Helmets shall not be removed until a player is safely in the dugout.



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- d. There may be not more than one on-deck batter outside the dugout at any time.
- e. All bats and equipment shall be removed immediately from the field so as not to pose a safety hazard to fielders.
- f. No batter or fielder may display his/her temper by throwing any piece of equipment either on the field or in the dugout, or by arguing with the umpire. The umpire in charge at his discretion may issue a team warning for the first violation of any of the above rules. Subsequent violations may result in a player being ejected and/or the violating team being assessed an “out”. The manager or coach of the team may use their proper discretion to sit a player for disciplinary reasons.
- g. A batter may not throw his/her bat intentionally in the process of hitting. No warning shall be needed before the umpire may declare a batter “out” for intentionally throwing a bat.
- h. **Wood bats only** are to be used in the league. You cannot use any metal and wood composite/hybrid bats.

9. PITCHING

- a. The pitching distance will be 54 feet.
- b. New pitchers receive eight warm-up pitches. A pitcher also receives a maximum of 8 warm up pitches per inning.
- c. A pitcher must be removed if he hits 2 batters in an inning or 3 batters in a game, but may continue the game at another position.
- d. Pitchers are not allowed to wear long white sleeves.



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- e. Pitchers shall be allowed to pitch in no more than 8 innings in any one calendar week. A calendar week runs from 12:01 AM, Sunday morning to 12:00 AM the following Saturday. Each calendar day runs from 12:01 AM to midnight.

- f. **PITCH COUNTS and OTHER PITCHING LIMITATIONS.**
 - 1. A pitcher can pitch a maximum of four (4) innings in one game. Delivery of a single pitch constitutes having pitched an inning.
 - 2. If a pitcher pitches more than one (1) inning OR more than 30 pitches, two days of rest are required (i.e., if a player pitches more than one inning on Sunday, he cannot pitch again until Wednesday).
 - 3. If a pitcher pitches 30 or less pitches, he can pitch on one days rest.
 - 4. If a pitcher pitches 40 or less pitches, he can pitch on two days rest.
 - 5. If a pitcher pitches 50 or less pitches, he can pitch on three days rest.
 - 6. If a pitcher pitches 75 or less pitches, he can pitch on four days rest.
 - 7. Maximum numbers of games a player may appear in a week is two. **The maximum number of pitches in a week is 125 pitches.**
 - 8. **75 pitches is the maximum number of pitches per appearance.** A pitcher cannot face a batter within three pitches remaining from his maximum pitch count. Once a pitchers pitch count is exceeded, he **must** be removed for the next batter.
 - 9. **NO CURVE BALLS or SLIDERS** (or simply no junk pitches) will be allowed. Please coach pitchers on change of speed and location. This rule is being implemented for the safety of the pitchers.



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10. During the playoffs, there may be some slight changes to the pitching rules. These will be distributed to the coaches before the playoffs begin.
 - g. Balks: There will be one warning per pitcher per game for the regular season. A balk will be called after one warning. Warnings are the umpire's discretion in the playoffs.
 - h. A pitcher is charged with the number of innings pitched or pitch counts in a specific calendar week in which they are pitched regardless of whether the games are league games, playoff, or postponed games, suspended games, tie games, forfeited games or exhibition games.
 - i. A manager and/or coach may visit with the pitcher two (2) times per inning; but, on the second visit the pitcher must be removed to play another position or to the bench. Umpires are responsible for keeping track of visits to the mound or conferences whereby the pitcher comes over to the base path. The umpire will decide what constitutes an official trip.
 - j. Once a pitcher has been removed from the game, he may not be reinstated to pitch again.
 - k. Official Game Record: The home team is responsible for maintaining the Official Game Record (See attached). The game record will be filled out in its entirety, signed by the manager of both teams and the umpire, and faxed or emailed to the league commissioner by the following Monday.

The purpose of the Official Game Record is to:

1. Record the innings pitched and pitch counts by individual pitchers for each team.
2. Provide a record for the score of the game.



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3. Provide a record of any and all warnings, forfeits, and/or suspensions issued by the game umpire.
4. Provide the managers with a means of identifying any and all problems – with the game umpire.
- l. Any serious violations to the pitching rules will result in an automatic game forfeiture for the offending team for the game to which the violation applies and a one-game suspension for the offending manager. Such violation will be noted on the Official Game Record. This will also apply to a second pitching violation.
- m. A third pitching violation will result in the automatic forfeiture of the game, suspension of the manager for the rest of the season, and ineligibility for managing and/or coaching for the next season.
- n. Pitchers in violation of any of the pitching rules can remain in the game but will immediately be removed from pitching.
- o. Upon completion of the season, all such suspensions will be forwarded to the secretary of the Pony Board.

10. GAME TIME AND PREPARATION

- a. Home team is required to take the third base dugout and initial use of the infield. Visiting team uses the first base dugout and is entitled to a pre-game warm-up on the infield of reasonably equal time. Since game time will be strictly adhered to, managers must use discretion and fairness in the usage of warm-up time. Due to field time restraints, the amount of pre-game warm-ups will be determined by the plate umpire. If time allows, a complete Pony game is seven innings.
- b. No full inning will begin after 2 hours unless four innings have not been completed (4 ½ if the home team is ahead).



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- c. Tie games will not be resumed in regular season games if time has expired.
- d. All games will begin at the published start time, unless the game before has exceeded its allotted time.
- e. If a game is called due to rain, it is an official game if 5 complete innings have been played (4 ½ if the home team is ahead).
- f. If a game is called due to rain and it is not an official game, the game will not be counted for either team's record.
- g. If a game is called due to rain and it is an official game, the score for the game will revert back to the score of the last completed inning.
- h. LIGHTNING: If the lightning detector sounds, everyone should leave the fields and return to their cars. It is not safe to return to the fields until the lightening detector has given the "all clear signal" (three horn blasts). Please see the detailed rules for lightning posted at the Beese concession stand. Also, please use your own judgment. If you feel you and your kids are in any danger, you have the right (and responsibility) to end a game.

11. MISCELLANEOUS

- a. When your team is batting you are only allowed 2 coaches on the field – the first base and third base coaches. Coaches must not at any time physically "aid" a base runner. If this situation arises, the umpire will call the base runner "out" and the give the offending coach a warning.
- b. When your team is in the field, you are not allowed to have coaches on the field of play unless you have requested the umpire to call time out and have received a time out or there is an injured player.
- c. A team must have a minimum of 6 players from a team's roster and a minimum of 8 players including replacement players at the start of the



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- game. Failure to have the required minimum number of players within five (5) minutes of the official start time shall result in forfeiture called by the umpire.
- d. Any manager or coach ejected from the game will automatically be suspended for the next game, subject to an appeal. A third ejection will result in an automatic suspension for the rest of the season and ineligibility for the manager and/or coach position for the next season. All such ejections will be noted on the Official Game Record.
 - e. If you have any complaints regarding umpires, coaches, etc., notate it on the Official Game Record and report it to the League Commissioner. Do not create a situation that would jeopardize the integrity of Barrington Youth Baseball & Softball.
 - f. Respect all umpire decisions. If you need to question the umpire, you must discuss it in a respectful way (this is not the big leagues). Vehement disagreement with the umpire will be noted on the Official Game Record. The umpire at his discretion may eject the offending manager or coach.
 - g. All teams are responsible for picking up everything (including garbage) in the dugouts after the game.
 - h. If there is a problem with a parent that appears to be out of control, you may go and call the local authorities. Please remain calm at all times.
 - i. Home Team will be responsible for raking the field after the game (around the bases & batters box).
 - j. All team players are encouraged to wear supporters, sliding pants and a protective cup. All catchers **must** wear a protective cup.
 - k. All players must compete with plastic or rubber-cleated shoes. No metal spikes are allowed.



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- l. Any manager or coach suspended and/or ejected from any game or who causes his/her team to forfeit a game due to rules violations, may appeal to the Pony Board for a hearing. All such appeals will be presented in writing to the Pony Commissioner who will forward it to the Pony Board.

- m. Specific game situations:
 1. Sliding: Sliding or avoiding contact is required at all bases in all potential play situations. Runners must try to avoid contact at the plate. All runners must slide straight to all bases. There will be no attempt at breaking up a double play. Violations of this rule will result in the base runner being call “out”.
 2. “In-field Fly Rule”: The “in-field fly rule” will be in effect when there is less than two outs and there are men on first and second or first, second, and third. The umpire will call “in-field fly rule” in these cases.
 3. The “Dropped Third Strike Rule”: A batter may run on a dropped third strike as long as first base is not occupied. With two outs and first occupied the batter may run on a third dropped strike.
 4. Squeeze Plays at Home:
 - Safety Squeeze: A boy on third may steal home after the batter has successfully bunted the ball.
 - Straight Steal of Home (or suicide squeeze): A runner may **not** steal home on the pitch. Stealing of home must be delayed.
 - Bunt/Slash: A hitter may not fake the bunt and then swing. The hitter will be out.



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- n. Please make the games enjoyable and safe for all the kids. We want the boys to have fun, be respectful, and learn the game of baseball.

12. OFFICIAL RULES

The Official Illinois High School Baseball Rules are the rules governing the BYB&S Pony League; however, where noted, the BYB&S house rules supersede the Official High School Rules.