



# South Sound Baseball Regular Season Rules

*Approved for Play - 2022*

## Precedence of Rules:

- SSB Rules first – these rules supersede PONY National
  - PONY National Rules – these rules supersede MLB
  - MLB Rules – these rules apply to what the rules above do not address
1. All leagues see PONY bat rules published separately and posted on web site.
  2. **Metal cleats are allowed Pony (14U) and up. No metal for Bronco and below. Metal cleats are prohibited on artificial mounds and turf fields; coaches and players must plan accordingly.**
  3. Eight players are required on defense, except Shetland may play with 6. If a team is unable to field the minimum required players, the game is forfeit.
  4. Unlimited defensive substitutions unless batting 9 or 10 with formal substitutions for Pony and up, per rule (5), except a player removed from the pitcher's position for any reason may not return to the mound during the same game.
  5. Bronco (12U) and below bats the entire line-up. Pony (14U) and up may bat 9 or 10 and use formal substitutions if desired.
    - a. When 10 are batting, one is an extra hitter who may be freely substituted on defense. Starters may re-enter once.
    - b. A Designated Hitter is not allowed.
  6. Players must play defense at least half the innings in a game (rounded down), including when formal substitutions are used (i.e., players must play at least 2 innings of defense in a 5-inning game or 3 in a 7-inning game). Managers must plan accordingly. Violations of this rule result in forfeiture and possible sanctions for the manager.
    - a. The minimum inning requirement is lifted for an injured player if the injury is declared to the umpire and opposing manager, and the player is removed from the lineup.
    - b. Teams are not forced to forfeit when failure to meet this requirement is a result of disciplinary action by the manager, provided the umpire-in-chief and opposing manager are informed at the time of the action, and the player is removed from the lineup.
    - c. The minimum inning requirement is lifted for a player added late in accordance with Rule (7) if the late player participates on defense during all remaining innings or until the minimum inning requirement is met.
  7. Late arriving players may be inserted at the end of the line-up prior to the beginning of defensive play by the team in question: in the 5th inning for Pony (14U) and up, the 4th inning for Mustang (10U) and Bronco (12U), and at any time for Shetland (6U) and Pinto (8U). Late arriving players must be played to ensure the best opportunity to meet the minimum inning requirement of Rule (6) above.



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8. An ejected or disqualified player is the only automatic out in SSB and will be recorded as such in the batting order unless using formal substitutions for Pony (14U) and higher leagues per Rule (5) and a substitute player is available.
  - a. If an eligible substitute is not available on the bench, the player last removed from the lineup may be used per PONY rules.
  - b. The game is forfeit if a team falls below 8 players as the result of an ejection.
9. Whenever an injured player is unable to complete an at bat or his/her time on base, the umpire and opposing manager must be informed, and the player must be removed from the game unless using formal substitutions per Rule (5).
  - a. A courtesy runner may be used for an injured player other than the catcher or pitcher of record only if the runner is removed from the game under Rule 6(A) as a result of the injury.
  - b. A player not removed from the game remains subject to the minimum innings requirement and must bat in turn unless substituted. A player who is not returned to the game in time to meet the minimum innings requirement must be removed from the game per rule 6(A).
10. All on-deck batters will stay behind the batter that is currently at bat.
  - a. If a right-handed batter is at-bat then the on-deck batter will be in the 3<sup>rd</sup> base on-deck circle.
  - b. If a left-handed batter is at-bat then the on-deck batter will be in the 1<sup>st</sup> base on-deck circle.

## Pitching Rules:

11. Any team member may pitch (excluding Shetland (6U) and Pinto (8U) where a machine is used.) subject to the restrictions of the pitch count as recommended by Pitch Smart Guidelines for the particular age classification unless modified by Pony Baseball.
12. MUSTANG (10U), BRONCO (12U), PONY (14U) and COLT/PALOMINO (18U) are to use the chart below.

<b>PitchSmart Guidelines Required Rest</b>						
<b>AGE</b>	<b>DAILY MAX PITCHES</b>	<b>0DAYS</b>	<b>1 DAY</b>	<b>2 DAYS</b>	<b>3 DAYS</b>	<b>4 DAYS</b>
7-8	50	1-20	21-35	36-50	N/A	N/A
9-10	75	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+
11-12	85	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+
13-14	95	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+
15-16	95	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-80	76+
17-18	105	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-80	81+

13. No pitcher shall appear in a game as a pitcher for three consecutive days, regardless of pitch count.
14. If a pitcher has the available pitches (aka has not reached their DAILY MAX PITCHES), a pitcher could pitch in two (2) games in the same day.
15. Pitchers reaching their maximum number of pitches in a day while pitching to a batter, may finish pitching to that batter before being removed.



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16. A pitcher is charged with the number of pitches in the specific calendar day and week in which they are pitched, regardless of whether they are local organization league games, playoff of postponed games or suspended games, tie games or exhibition games. Rest is calculated as per calendar day.
17. **Scorekeepers must maintain accurate pitch counts for both team's pitchers.**
  - a. **Both books are to be signed in ink by both managers and the umpire in chief.**
  - b. **Pitching logs also must be reported along with scores.**
18. Pitchers in violation of any of the pitching rules shall be considered ineligible players, subject to the penalties stated for use of an ineligible player (see Pony Baseball Rules 18 - Penalties Section(s) C and D ).
  - a. The **player and manager** will be ejected, the game forfeit and said player and manager ruled ineligible for the next scheduled contest.
19. A new pitcher is allowed 8 warm-up pitches. Pitchers returning to the mound are allowed 5 warm-up pitches.
  - a. Pitchers should complete their warmup in approximately one minute. Pitchers must be ready and work diligently.
  - b. Umpires may allow additional time or pitches in cold weather or when other circumstances dictate but should ensure the proper progress of the game.
20. **Inning length for:**
  - a. Shetland: after each batter on a team has batted.
  - b. Pinto: 3 outs or 3 runs scored.
  - c. Mustang: 3 outs or 5 runs scored through the 4th inning, otherwise, 3 outs.
  - d. Bronco: 3 outs or 6 runs scored, through the 4th inning, otherwise, 3 outs.
  - e. Pony and up: 3 outs
21. **Mercy rule:** 10 runs after the 4th inning and 8 after the 5th inning for all levels except Shetland and Pinto.
22. **Official games, regulation games and time limits.**
  - a. Games will be played to time limit or regulation innings, whichever occurs first. No new inning may be started once the time limit has been reached. Any inning started prior to time limit that extends beyond said limit will be completed.
  - b. Extra innings (i.e., the 7th inning in a Bronco game) may be started in a tie game provided the time limit has not been reached; otherwise, it is acceptable for a regular season game to end in a tie.
  - c. **Shetland (6U):** official game 1 complete inning; regulation game, 6 innings; time 1:15 (no new inning)
  - d. **Pinto (8U):** official game 2 complete innings; regulation game 6 innings; time 1:30 (no new inning)
  - e. **Mustang (10U) & Bronco (12U):** official game 4 innings; regulation game 6 innings; time 1:45 (no new inning)
  - f. **Pony (14U):** official game 5 innings. regulation game 7 innings; time 1:45 (no new inning)
  - g. **Colt-Palomino (18U):** official game 5 innings. regulation game 7 innings; time 2:30 (no new inning)



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23. The only time an official game requirement must be considered is when play must be stopped before time due to field conditions or another matter beyond the control of the officials, including darkness or the failure of artificial lighting. The following rules govern:
- If the last complete inning of play met the official game requirement, and the umpire has not put the ball in play to begin the next inning, the game will be called, and the score will be according to the last inning of play.
  - If the home team is leading in the bottom of an inning required to be completed in order to meet an official game requirement, the game will be called, and the home team will be declared the winner with the score recorded as it stands when the game is called.
  - If the official game requirement has been met previously and the home team is leading in the bottom of the current inning, the game will be called, and the home team will be declared the winner with the score recorded as it stands when the game is called.
  - Regardless of score, if play is in the top of the inning at the time play is stopped, the game will be called, and the score will be recorded as it stood after the last complete inning of play.
  - If an official game has not been played, and none of the above conditions have been met because of field conditions or another matter beyond the control of the officials other than the slow pace of play, the game will be suspended and continued at a later date. **Bookkeepers confirm game situation prior to leaving the field.**
24. **Slug bunting** – a bunt position followed by an aggressive swing is prohibited. If the batter contacts the ball, he or she will be declared out. The ball is dead, and runners may not advance. Otherwise, the umpire will issue a warning and a strike will be called.
25. **Headfirst slides** are allowed for Pony (14U) and up. Bronco (12U) and below are not allowed to perform headfirst slides except when returning to a base in close proximity, including a pickoff attempt, an over-run, or when in a rundown. A baserunner will be called out for attempting a headfirst slide in Bronco and below age groups.
26. **Bat Regulations:**
- Non-wood bats are identified by a "Drop Factor," which is the difference between the length of the bat in inches and the weight of the bat in ounces. *For example, a 30" bat weighing 21 ounces would be referred to as a Drop 9. A 33-inch bat weighing 30 ounces would be a Drop 3 bat. Drop 3 bats are generally for older players.*
  - Bats Used in PONY Baseball Play must meet the following criteria:
    - No bat shall be used if dented, cracked, modified, or misshaped.
    - All bats must be 2-5/8" or less in diameter. **2 ¾ inch bats are not allowed for play at any level.**
    - Wood bats 2-5/8" or less in diameter are approved at all levels.
  - Non-wood bats are approved for play as follows:
    - 2-5/8" diameter Drop 3 bats must be stamped BBCOR .50 (or less) by the manufacturer and are legal at all levels of play.
    - USABat: With the exception of -3 BBCOR Certified bats, all 2-1/4" and 2-5/8" Bats stamped by the manufacturer with USABat licensing stamp are legal for league and tournament play.



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27. If a safety base is in use, the white portion must be located where first base would normally be (in fair territory) and the colored portion in foul territory.
- A batted ball hitting any part of the white portion is fair.
  - On the initial throw to first base from the infield or outfield, the batter-runner must touch the orange portion of the bag. If the runner steps partly on the white and orange bag and does not otherwise interfere with or hinder the play, he will be called safe on appeal.
  - If the runner steps part way on the white bag and contacts the defensive player at all, or in the opinion of the official interferes or distracts from the play, or if the runner steps fully on the white bag, he will be called out on appeal, except when D below applies.
  - The defensive player must always touch some part of the white portion. This rule is in effect only on the initial play at first base. This does not include:
    - Returning to the base after over running. Runner goes to white. A runner fully on the orange bag is off base.
    - Running on a base hit to the outfield (runner may touch the orange or white part)
    - Re-tag to advance on a fly ball. Runner goes to white.
    - The runner may use the white part of the bag and will be called safe on appeal if in the opinion of the official he/she does so solely for the purpose of avoiding the defensive player. Normal rules of obstruction and interference remain in effect per umpire judgment.
- Note: If the baserunner uses the orange portion at any time after the first attempt at first base and is not in contact with the white portion, he is considered off the base.**
28. Incidental contact occurs in baseball; however, a runner must slide or avoid contact if a fielder is attempting a tag. A runner who fails to slide or avoid will be called out. A player may be ejected for intentional, flagrant or malicious contact. In all cases the rules of interference and obstruction are in effect.
29. For Mustang (10U) play and up, a thrown bat is a delayed dead ball. The batter will be called out or the defense may elect the result of the play.
30. A **courtesy runner** is allowed on request to the umpire in charge, for the catcher or pitcher who last fielded the position in the previous inning. A courtesy runner will be permitted only when ready to immediately assume the position of the runner on base. The courtesy runner will be the player farthest from hitting in the lineup (usually the last out), except when using substitutes, the courtesy runner will be any eligible bench player.
31. **Game Balls and Scores:**
- Each team must supply one new game ball for each game when both teams are SSB teams. The home team provides two new game balls for each interlock game. Hard balls need to have a leather (not synthetic) cover.
  - The winning team is responsible for reporting game results and pitch counts for both teams within **24 hours** of game completion.
  - The SSB team is responsible for reporting interlock games (aka games vs Shelton and greys harbor).
  - The procedure is posted in the Coaches Corner on our website. Failure to report within 24 hours of the completion of the game will result in the game being recorded as a tie, except that interlock games will be recorded as a loss. Penalties for managers who fail to report within 24 hours are as follows:



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- i. 1st offense will result in a meeting with the coach and a Coach Compliance Member.
  - ii. 2nd violation will result in a one (1) game suspension.
  - iii. 3rd or more: Further violations will result in a minimum one (1) game suspension, the league has discretion to increase this penalty or expel and or ban the offender.
- e. Shetland and Pinto game results are not reported.
  - f. The home team is responsible for reporting a game cancellation. The procedure is posted in the Coaches Corner on our website. Only weather-related cancellations will be rescheduled.
  - g. Interlock game results (games against non-SSB teams) are applied to league standings.
  - h. Interlock games will be played under the home team's league rules.

## 32. Borrowing players:

- a. If a team has fewer than 9 players available, players may be borrowed from SSB registered ball players of that level or the level below. Borrowed players must be announced at plate meeting, bat last, and may not pitch. A team borrowing players can only borrow for a team total of 10 players (i.e. a team having 8 players can borrow 2 players for a total of 10. **Violation of this rule will result in the game being forfeit.**
- b. Same player may not be borrowed more than three times by the same team during the season. **Violation of this rule will result in the 4th game being forfeit.**
- c. During the pregame conference, coaches will declare any borrowed players and their position in the lineup.

33. These rules are in effect for all play, except that SSB may publish supplemental rules for the fall season and tournament play.

34. All Head Coaches, Assistant Coaches and Volunteers will read the SSB Policies and Procedures. These are located on the SSB Website.

### **FOR THE 2022 SPRING REGULAR SEASON ONLY:**

Any back-to-back scheduled games (weekdays only) during the regular season will have the following time constraint rules:

1. A drop-dead time of 2 hours will be placed on all weekday back-to-back games with the original time limit still in effect. The original time limit rule is "No new inning after 1 hour and 45 minutes".
2. Explanation of this rule is as follows: A new inning may start before the 1:45 time limit has expired. This new inning must be completed before the 2 hour drop dead time expires. If the inning has not been completed by the 2 hour mark then the completed score reverts back to the last complete inning.

**See Division-Specific rules on following pages.**



# South Sound Baseball Regular Season Rules

## Rules specific for the SHETLAND Division

1. Base path is 50'.
2. 9" 5 ounce Safe-soft ball is used.
3. Defensive players must rotate positions each inning of play and are expected to play all positions on the field during the course of the season unless in the judgment of the coach a player should not field a particular position as a matter of safety (usually 1B, 3B catcher and pitcher).
4. All players may take the field for defense. A maximum of 6 players are allowed on the infield at the beginning of the play. All outfielders must begin each play in the outfield, at least 15 feet beyond the baselines.
5. It is the home team's responsibility to provide a volunteer umpire.
6. Coach pitch - the batter gets 4 pitches to put the ball in play. If the ball is not put in play by the 4th pitch, a tee is used.
7. Coach-pitchers should kneel while pitching.
8. Coach-pitchers are not required to be engaged with the pitcher's plate.
9. Runners may remain on base after being put out.
10. Bunting is not allowed.



# South Sound Baseball Regular Season Rules

## Rules specific for the PINTO Division

1. Base path is 60'.
2. 9" 5ounce Safe-soft ball is used.
3. Strikeouts are recorded. No walks are allowed.
4. No base stealing. Base runner may take a lead after the ball leaves the pitching machine.
5. When the ball is in the possession of an infielder, and in the judgment of the umpire all play on the runner or runners has ceased, the umpire shall call time and the ball is dead. Runners between bases when time is called advance to the next base when no put-out attempt is made.
6. All overthrows are dead balls except catchers throws to first base. Baserunners advance one base beyond last base legally attained.
7. Catchers may throw to 1st base after a pitch in an attempt to pick off a base runner. The base runner may not advance on an overthrow in this situation.
8. Bunting is not allowed.
9. 10 defenders used in the field. Outfielders must begin each play in the outfield, at least 15 feet beyond the baselines.
10. It is the home team's responsibility to provide a volunteer umpire. The umpire may assume a position behind the plate or the pitching mound.
11. Defensive players must rotate through the positions except for pitcher, catcher, first and third base if the coach believes player safety might be at risk.
12. Pitching distance is 38'.
13. League format is machine pitch. Home team will provide the pitching machine.
14. Machine pitch. Five pitches or three strikes. The batter is declared out after a fifth pitch, except that an at bat cannot end on a foul ball.
15. Machine speeds and settings: The machine should be set to around 28-32 MPH, which translates roughly to the following settings:
  - a. 4 on the pedal
  - b. 3 on the handle
  - c. 3 on the ball holder
16. When machine pitch is used, the pitcher will stand five feet to the rear of the machine and three feet to the left or right, with one or both feet in contact with a two-foot line representing a pitching rubber. If one foot is free, it must be on the side away from the pitching machine.
17. A batted ball that strikes the pitching machine and remains fair, remains in play but cannot be caught for an out.





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## Rules specific for the MUSTANG Division

1. Base path is 60'.
2. Pitching distance is 46'.
3. 9" 5-ounce hard ball is used.
4. Base stealing is allowed.
5. Baserunner can lead-off.
6. Balk rule in effect
7. Dropped third strike rule is **NOT** in effect for 10U Mustang.
8. Ball is live or dead according to MLB rules.
9. Infield fly enforced.
10. Metal cleats not allowed.

## Rules specific for the BRONCO Division

1. Base path is 70'.
2. Pitching distance is 50'.
3. Metal cleats not allowed.

## Rules specific for the PONY Division

1. Base path is 80'.
2. Pitching distance is 54'.
3. Metal cleats are allowed. No metal cleats allowed on portable mounds or turf fields.

## Rules specific for the COLT, COLT-PALOMINO and PALOMINO LEAGUES

1. Base path is 90'.
2. Pitching distance is 60'6".
3. Bat must be -3 (drop 3) length minus weight difference or less (e.g. drop 2, but not drop 5) and BBCOR certified in accordance with PONY rules.
4. Metal cleats are allowed (many sports parks disallow metal cleats on portable mounds).



# South Sound Baseball Regular Season Rules

## Coach Code of Conduct

South Sound Baseball has implemented the following Coach Code of Conduct for the important message it holds about the proper role of Coaches in supporting and developing players and promoting good sportsmanship and safety. Coaches should read and understand the below prior to accepting a coach position. By accepting a Manager/Coach or Asst. Coach position, you hereby agree and pledge to provide a safe and supportive environment, demonstrate a positive attitude, and thereby acknowledge and agree:

- I will engage, teach and provide enjoyment to young players through participation in organized baseball. Each player will be treated fairly, with their welfare being the most important consideration at all times.
- I acknowledge that I have tremendous influence on the mental and physical growth of the player and, thus, will never place the value of winning above the value of good sportsmanship and character.
- I recognize that my conduct reflects on the entire South Sound Baseball and Pony Baseball organizations and will not act in a manner that jeopardizes the league or its relationship with players, families, or community partners.
- I will refrain from the use of alcohol, drugs, and tobacco products when in contact with players.
- I will promote the entire South Sound Baseball program and manage/coach my team in harmony with the mission and goals of the Pony/South Sound Baseball Organization.
- I will, to the best of my ability, learn and understand the rules of Pony/South Sound Baseball and teach them to my players. I will not seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules.
- I will organize practices that are enjoyable and challenging for the players. I will familiarize myself with the techniques and strategies of baseball and I will encourage all my players to be team players.
- I will respect and support umpires. I will not indulge in conduct which would incite players or spectators against the umpires and understand that public criticism of umpires, league officials or players will not be tolerated.
- Before and after games, I will engage the coaches of the competing team and exchange cordial greetings to set the correct tone for the event.
- I will maintain an open line of communication with parents and players and explain the goals and objectives of South Sound Baseball and our team.
- I will promote good sportsmanship in both winning and/or losing, promote and encourage players to show respect for others, to act and play with integrity, and take personal responsibility for their words and actions.
- I will be generous with my praise when it is deserved; I will be consistent, honest, fair and ethical; I will not berate players publicly or shame them.
- I will ensure that all players regardless of skill or ability are allotted at a minimum the guaranteed play time as required by South Sound Baseball.

I understand that there will be zero tolerance for coaches who intimidate or physically/verbally abuse players, officials, or participants at any South Sound Baseball/Pony Baseball event. Further, I understand that myself and any other coach or assistant coach on my team guilty of improper conduct at any South Sound Baseball/Pony Baseball event may be asked to leave the field of facility, and may be suspended or dismissed by the Board (in accordance with the rules and regulations as set forth by South Sound Baseball and Pony Baseball).