



**Newcastle Baseball Club League (NBCL),
a PONY Baseball League**

**2026 Rules and Regulations
Rev. 03/232026**



Newcastle PONY Baseball

RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

Table of Contents

1.	REGISTRATION – PLAYERS/MANAGERS/ASSISTANT COACHES/VOLUNTEERS (All Divisions)	3
A.	Division Structure	3
B.	Registration Process	3
2.	TEAM FORMATION (Shetland, Pinto, Mustang, Bronco, and Pony divisions).....	4
A.	Selection of Managers / Assistant Coaches (Shetland, Pinto, Mustang, Bronco, and Pony divisions)	4
B.	Assessment / Tryouts (Pinto, Mustang, Bronco, and Pony divisions).....	4
C.	Player Profiles (Pinto, Mustang, Bronco, and Pony divisions)	5
D.	Draft Procedures (Pinto, Mustang, Bronco, and Pony divisions)	6
E.	Shetland Division Team Formation	8
F.	Colt and Palomino Team Formation	8
G.	NBCL All-Star Teams Formation	8
H.	Uniform Ordering	9
3.	LEAGUE SCHEDULE.....	9
A.	Shetland, Pinto, and Mustang Divisions	9
B.	Bronco and Pony Divisions	9
C.	Division schedules	9
D.	End-of-Season Tournament.....	10
A.	Field Use and Maintenance	11
B.	Uniforms/Equipment	12
C.	Scorebooks/Line-Up Cards	12
D.	Managers/Coaches/Players/Spectators Rules of Conduct	13
E.	Discipline.....	14
4.	PLAYING AND FIELD RULES	15
A.	Shetland Division Playing Rules	16
B.	Pinto Division Playing Rules.....	17
C.	Mustang Division Playing Rules	21
D.	Bronco & Pony Division Playing Rules	23
E.	Colt/Palomino Division Rules	25
F.	Protested Games	25
G.	Complaints (Fans).....	25
H.	Umpires	25
I.	Pitch Counts.....	26

Newcastle PONY Baseball RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

INTRODUCTION

Purpose: The purpose of this document is to outline the League specific amendments and exceptions made to the current Official MLB Rules and the current National PONY League rules.

Intent: It is the intent of these rules to enhance the safety of the game of youth baseball, clarify league specific activity, and to preserve the integrity of the game of baseball while developing baseball players in alignment with the mission of the Newcastle PONY League.

Responsibility: It is the responsibility of all Newcastle Board Members, Managers and Coaches, Parents and Players to be familiar with and abide by the rules contained in this document and the current Official Rules and National PONY League rules.

1. REGISTRATION – PLAYERS/MANAGERS/ASSISTANT COACHES/VOLUNTEERS (All Divisions)

A. Division Structure

1. A player's league age follows [PONY Baseball League Age Key](#)
2. **Shetland 6U division:** player of league ages 5 or 6. Players requesting to play-up must be league age 4.
3. **Pinto 8U division:** player of league ages 7 or 8. Players requesting to play-up must be league age 5 or 6.
4. **Mustang 10U division:** player of league ages 9 or 10. Players requesting to play-up must be league age 7 or 8.
5. **Bronco 12U division:** player of league ages 11 or 12. Players requesting to play-up must be league age 9 or 10.
6. **Pony 14U division:** player of league ages 13 or 14. Players requesting to play-up must be league age 11 or 12.
7. **Colt 16U division:** player of league ages 15 or 16. Players requesting to play-up must be league age 13 or 14.
Note: this division was last supported under the Newcastle Miner's program for the 2021 season.
8. **Palomino 18U division:** player of league ages 17 or 18. Players requesting to play-up must be league age 15 or 16. Note: this division was last supported under the Newcastle Miner's program for the 2021 season.

B. Registration Process

1. The Board of Directors ("Board") shall determine the number of player openings for each division.
2. The Board and/or the Registrar shall supervise registration.
3. During registration, if the maximum capacity for a division is reached or after registration for a division has closed, the Registrar shall maintain a wait list for the division.
4. Player/Manager/Assistant Coach/Volunteer registration shall be through Sports Connect from Stack Sports accessed through the [Newcastle Baseball website](#).
 - i. A parent sets up an account and then registers player(s) for the division based on the player's league age.
 - (a) A parent may also request their sons/daughter to play-up or play-down one division during the registration process.
 - (b) For each player registered in Shetland or Pinto division, they can identify a friend or manager/coach request during the registration process. Friend/coach requests cannot be changed once submitted, unless approved by the Board. Note: there is no guarantee that any of the friend and/or manager/coach requests will be able to be honored, see team formation rule 2-D-9.
 - ii. Registration for Manager, Assistant Coach or other Volunteer positions are within the registration system.

Newcastle PONY Baseball

RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

- iii. Registration by division remains open until player skills assessment. After that it is a Board decision to keep registration open.
 - iv. Fees must be paid in full prior to the start of the assessment/tryout or the child will not be allowed to participate in the assessment/tryout. The Board may grant exceptions.
 - v. Any player applying for reduced/waived sign-up fee (“hardship applicants”) must submit a written request to the Board and/or Registrar. The request shall be subject to a vote by the Board. Prior to the start of each season, a percentage of hardships will be granted based on total registrations.
5. For all rules not mentioned above, see [PONY Rulebook](#).

2. TEAM FORMATION (Shetland, Pinto, Mustang, Bronco, and Pony divisions)

A. Selection of Managers / Assistant Coaches (Shetland, Pinto, Mustang, Bronco, and Pony divisions)

1. Registration for Manager and Assistant Coach positions is within the league’s registration system that must be accessed through the [Newcastle Baseball website](#).
2. Managers must be at least 21 years of age and shall be responsible for his/her selection of assistant coaches. Assistant coaches may be under 18 but will require Board review and approval.
3. Based on the number of registered players for a division and available field capacity, the Board will determine how many teams will be formed for the upcoming season.
4. The Board shall screen applicants for manager and assistant coach positions for each division and determine if the prospective manager/assistant coach has the qualifications to manage/coach in the division.
5. Previous managers/assistant coaches found to be in violation of minimum participation in League activities, violation of Manager/Coach/Player Guidelines, displaying misconduct or unsportsmanlike conduct, or the subject of discipline may be prevented from managing/coaching.
6. Managers for the upcoming season shall be selected using the following criteria, in the order shown:
 - i. A manager from the previous regular season in the same division.
 - ii. A manager from the previous regular season, in a different division (i.e., Pinto, Mustang, etc.).
 - iii. A coach of record from the previous regular season, in the same division.
 - iv. A coach of record from the previous regular season, in a different division.
 - v. A person whose child played for NBCL last season and who managed in NBCL prior to last season.
 - vi. A person who was not associated with NBCL last season, but who has managed or coached in NBCL prior to last season.
 - vii. In the case of more than one qualified person covered in No’s. i-vi, a vote by the Board shall be held to determine a final decision when not enough teams are available to accommodate all requests to manage.
 - viii. In the case where there are no manager volunteers or candidates are not qualified, the Board will request existing manager/assistant coach combinations to split and take over the manager positions that are not assigned.
7. Background checks shall be done on all managers and assistant coaches to confirm their suitability to perform the duties of the positions. The Board shall take appropriate action if a background check raises concerns.

B. Assessment / Tryouts (Pinto, Mustang, Bronco, and Pony divisions)

1. All players targeted for Pinto, Mustang, Bronco, or Pony divisions shall be required to participate in the player skills assessment/tryout, unless approved by the Board.
2. The Board has the authority to use an external organization to operate the player skills assessments/tryouts including running the skills stations and providing player skills scoring.

Newcastle PONY Baseball

RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

- i. Bellevue College Baseball team currently hosts Newcastle Baseball's primary player skills assessments/tryouts and provides independent scoring of all players in attendance. The President or Registrar shall schedule player skills assessment with the Bellevue College Baseball team's Coach based on combined availability and assessment location (field or indoors) and communicate this information to the Board, post on the league website and communicate to league families.
- ii. A secondary player skills assessment/tryout may be scheduled by the Board to assess the division membership unable to attend the primary event.
3. The Registrar supervises assessments/tryouts, with the President and/or Vice President, in attendance as observers.
4. The Registrar shall provide assessment/tryout scoring sheets by division based on registered players from Sports Connect from Stack Sports.
 - i. Any walkup participants must register through Sports Connect from Stack Sports accessed through the [Newcastle Baseball website](#) before being eligible to participate in the assessment/tryout.
5. Proof of Birth Date may be verified for each player, by Registrar or Board member performing check-in at the assessments.
6. Managers and their assistant coaches will be identified prior to assessments. Managers should make a good faith effort to be at assessments or have minimum one (1) coach from the team present to observe and score player skills.
7. A player's skills will be assessed using a 1 (low) to 5 (high) rating scale across a set of applicable skills for each division. Scoring is based on the player's skills shown at the event and should not include any historical knowledge.
8. If a player is suspected of "tanking" the assessment, the managers have the right, immediately following the assessment to request that these players be disqualified from draft eligibility and placed into the "hat" as a random selection. This request must be conducted immediately after the assessment and requires at least 50% of the managers/assistant coaches (1 vote per team) and the agreement of the Registrar/President/Vice-President in attendance to enact. If enacted, the Registrar shall notify the Board. The Board will have the final decision on whether to allow the player to remain "draftable" or to be placed in the "hat". The parent and/or player may appeal the ruling prior to the draft, but the Board will make the final determination and their decision stands.
9. All assessment scores will be returned to the Registrar after the assessment. Scores will be tabulated and shared among all managers/coaching staff (within each division) and board prior to the draft.

C. Player Profiles (Pinto, Mustang, Bronco, and Pony divisions)

1. In support of competitive balance across all teams in a division supplemental information is to be provided to Managers/Assistant Coaches during the draft process to aide all Managers in making more informed drafting decisions beyond the scores from player skills assessment.
2. The player profile sheet will consist of a rolling one-year plus of data from current and previous year assessments and teams the player is/was a member of. This data could be thought of as similar to the information on the back of a baseball card.
 - i. Current year targeted division (i.e., Pinto, Mustang, Bronco, Pony)
 - ii. Current year league age (e.g., 5-14)
 - iii. Current year pre-draft round based on assessment score (e.g., 1 – n based on sorting of Bellevue College assessment scores [high to low] divided by number of teams in division)
 - iv. Current year player skills average assessment score from Bellevue College players (e.g., average score from hitting, playing shortstop, playing outfield, and pitching)
 - v. Current year player skills average assessment score from NBCL assessors (e.g., average score from hitting,

Newcastle PONY Baseball

RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

playing shortstop, playing outfield, and pitching from across all assessors)

- vi. Current year speed rating (i.e., fast, average, slow) based on timed 60-foot sprint.
- vii. Current year Select team (e.g., 8U-teamname-AAA, 10U-teamname-AAA, 11U-teamname-Majors)
- viii. Previous year Recreation team (e.g., 8U-teamname, 12U-teamname)
- ix. Previous year All-Star team (e.g., 8U-AllStars, 10U-AllStars)
- x. Previous year Select team (e.g., 8U-teamname-AAA, 10U-teamname-AAA, 11U-teamname-Majors)
- xi. Previous year round the player was drafted.

D. Draft Procedures (Pinto, Mustang, Bronco, and Pony divisions)

1. The Board shall schedule drafts for Pinto, Mustang, Bronco, and as needed Pony divisions. These drafts will typically be held in mid-late February either before or after mid-winter break.
2. An officer from the Board should be present to preside over the draft process. The presiding Board Officer should not be a coach in the Division being drafted to avoid a conflict of interest.
3. Prior to the start of the draft, any players identified as a safety concern will be addressed. The presiding Board member will provide recommendations to the voting Board and the Board will determine if the action is sufficient. This should be completed the night of the draft with a notification to the affected player's family made within 24-48 hours of the closure of the draft.
4. Prior to the draft, player assessment scoring anomalies will be discussed among the managers of each applicable division. For example, a discussion will be held about a player receiving a 5 (high score) from one assessor and a 1 (low score) from another assessor. Any scoring changes will be agreed upon by a majority of managers (1 vote per team).
5. Prior to the draft, "draftable" players who did not attend an assessment may have an assessment score assigned by the coaches present at the draft. If the coaches present are unable to assign an assessment score that player will be placed as a "hat" pick.
6. The Registrar shall provide the player profile worksheet and details of the current year assessment scoring to all managers and assistant coaches prior to the draft.
7. Each team shall be entitled to "pre-assign" up to three (3) players to its roster prior to the draft. Each player must be a child, grandchild, or legal guardianship of one of the team's manager or assistant coaches. Any other situations shall require Board approval. The only exception shall be for "brother/sister option" described below. The manager must notify the Registrar of the team's pre-assigned players by 6:00PM the day before the division's draft. The managers can only pre-assign players that are playing within the division in which they are leading a team (Exception: Pony player playing on a high school baseball team). Pre-assigned players shall result in the use of draft pick for rounds as applicable to the assessment score of the player. If a team's pre-assigned player is not able to attend the assessments, then they will be given a score of 5 and are thus considered a 1st round draft pick.
 - i. Brother/sister option— Although no one is obligated, it is the practice of NBCL to honor requests of parents that brothers and/or sisters be assigned to the same team. Such requests must be directed to the Registrar prior to the draft. Players failing to participate in assessments may lose the right to the brother/sister option.
 - ii. Managers/coaches choosing to exercise the brother/sister option may freeze a maximum of four (4) players. Freezes shall result in the use of draft rounds as applicable to the rating of the player assessed during the assessment/tryout.
8. In the event a parent does not want his/her child to play for a given manager/assistant coach, the parent shall be required to notify the Registrar, in writing, prior to the division draft. Such requests shall be limited to one (1) request per season. All players affected shall be handled on an individual basis and all requests shall be kept confidential. In applying for this exception, the parent must present a valid and compelling rationale. All requests

Newcastle PONY Baseball

RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

are subject to the approval of the Board. The Registrar shall notify managers affected by such requests prior to the start of the draft.

9. Player requests and manager/coach requests can be submitted during the registration process, see rule 1-B-4. The Board has determined that while allowing these requests, they need to be constrained to provide a foundation for a competitively balanced set of teams in a division.
 - i. Pinto division
 - (a) Initial Pinto rosters may have player requests and manager/coach requests pre-assigned to their roster ahead of the draft as follows: (1) the children or grandchildren of the team manager/coach(es), (2) two player requests and/or manager/coach requests and (3) an unlimited number of player requests and manager/coach requests for 6U and 7U year league age players that have never played in Newcastle Pinto.
 - (b) The Registrar will work with each Pinto manager to determine their set of player requests and manager/coach requests that become the baseline of each team's roster before the draft is started.
 - ii. Mustang/Bronco/Pony divisions
 - (a) Initial team rosters: Preassigned players are limited to children and/or grandchildren of the manager/assistant coaches, see rule 2-D-7.
 - (b) Player and/or coach requests are not honored.
 - (c) All players that are not preassigned are in the player pool as individuals (no pairs).
10. A minimum of eleven (11) to a maximum of thirteen (13) players shall be drafted for each team, depending on the number of sign-ups. The Board at its discretion may allow less or more players per team to address a roster situation in a particular season for a specific division.
11. Teams shall be established by a player draft:
 - i. A minimum of one (1) and a maximum of three (3) team representatives of record must attend draft night.
 - ii. Drafting order shall be established by a random drawing before the start of the draft. Teams will "snake" down, then up through the first two rounds, and every two rounds after that. (For example, in a four-team division, teams will choose the first round in the order of their draw, 1-4, and then reverse that order for the second round, 4-1.)
 - iii. Based on assessment scores from Bellevue College players and any adjustments authorized by the Board, the draft board for a division will be sorted from highest average score to lower average score. Based on the number of teams in that division, the players will be tagged with a pre-draft round indicator. This round tag will be used to place team's pre-assigned players to their draft board. The round tag is based on the static ranking of all players in the division's draft and does not change as players are added to the draft board (Excel file). If the slot for a player's round is already filled, the player will be slotted to the next lower round that is open.
 - iv. Once the draft is completed, and all players placed on a team, if there are additional registrations for the division the Registrar and Board will determine which team to place the player on based on skills of the players, number of players on a team and overall competitiveness of each roster with a goal of division parity.
 - (a) Under no circumstances shall managers/assistant coaches be allowed to withhold players from registration, or to "wait" for a specific player to become available from the waiting list, in an effort to ensure player placement on a specific team. Exception: Pony division - Should the next available player be a high school player; the manager shall have the option to accept that player or the first available non-high school player. Players' names shall remain anonymous until after the selection. Any manager/assistant coach violating the spirit and intent of the open draft system by illegally freezing players, withholding players from registration, or otherwise attempting to obtain a specific player by any

Newcastle PONY Baseball

RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

means other than a legal draft pick, may be suspended at the discretion of the Board.

- (b) Any parent attempting to manipulate the draft process or results by violating the spirit and intent of the open draft shall have their player's registration dispositioned by the board: assigned to another team in the division or registration is declined for attempting to game the system.

12. All players on a wait list, or players to be placed in a division where there are openings (no list), shall not be considered for placement until there is a completed registration in Sports Connect from Stack Sports accessed through the [Newcastle Baseball website](#).
13. Once notified that a player has dropped from a team, the Registrar shall immediately assign the next player on the wait list to the team striving for division parity.
14. Team names (and uniforms) shall be selected using the reverse sequence of the draft order.
15. Any trades will be approved by the Board with such timing, procedure and process as may be approved by the Board.

E. Shetland Division Team Formation

1. The Registrar shall form Shetland teams using all registration data including friend and manager/coach requests.
2. Shetland teams will have 7-9 players assigned to each team depending on the total number of registered players and managers who have volunteered to lead teams.
3. Team names (and uniforms) shall be established by a random drawing across the division managers.

F. Colt and Palomino Team Formation

1. The Colt and Palomino Division shall be an all-year program.
2. Pre-formed teams will be accepted upon the approval of the Board and Division Director.
3. Pony or Colt traditional age group players will be allowed to play up in Colt or Palomino if they are part of a pre-formed high school team that will participate together in Colt or Palomino regular season play.
4. Players not coming from preformed teams may have tryouts.
5. Players are not guaranteed a spot on a team by registration alone.
6. The Colt and Palomino seasons shall start immediately after the high school season ends.
7. The Colt and Palomino regular seasons will end as determined by the Division Director, Registrar and/or Board.
8. Individual Colt and Palomino teams may continue to play beyond All-Stars as a combined Colt/Palomino team.
9. After All-Stars, Colt and Palomino players added to a team roster must register with the NBCL League.

G. NBCL All-Star Teams Formation

1. NBCL All-Star teams shall only consist of recreation players from the spring season of the same year.
2. All-Star teams may be formed if there are enough qualified players for the team. Possible All-Star teams include: 7U Coach-pitch, 8U Coach-pitch, 8U Player-pitch, 9U Player-pitch, 10U Player-pitch, 11U Player-pitch, 12U Player-pitch, 13U Player-pitch, and 14U Player-pitch.
3. By end of the 2nd week of May, the managers of Pinto, Mustang, Bronco, and Pony divisions shall submit a list of their best players by league age to the Board to attend an All-Star tryout.
4. All-Star tryouts shall be scheduled for the 2nd or 3rd week of May. The managers and assistant coaches of the division are the tryout scorers along with any Board members.
5. The skills assessed at the tryouts will include hitting off live pitching, playing shortstop, playing outfield, pitching and speed.

Newcastle PONY Baseball

RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

6. The Board will use the tryout scores, player stats from the current recreation season, and inputs from the managers and assistant coaches to determine the final All-Star roster for each team. A virtual meeting for All-Star teams by division (e.g., 7U & 8U in a meeting) will be held for this collaboration between the board, managers, and assistant coaches.
7. Once All-Star players are determined for an All-Star team, the manager and assistant coaches will be determined in the same virtual meeting.
8. The Board shall notify the parents of all All-Star candidates if they made or do not make the All-Star team they tried out for.
9. Parents of All-Star players are responsible for most costs of their All-Star team including tournament fees, uniform jerseys (2), umpires for games. Coaches are responsible for the cost of their All-Star jerseys (2). The League covers the cost of All-Star players and coaches' caps, and belts for new All-Stars. If a player has lost their All-Star belt from a previous season, they must buy a new one.

H. Uniform Ordering

1. Once the teams are formed for each division or All-Star team the Equipment Manager will work with the managers of each team to gather the jersey size, jersey number and cap size for all players.
2. The manager will also include with their order four (4) caps for the manager, assistant coaches, and scorekeeper.
3. Managers, assistant coaches, and parents may also order jerseys for themselves.
4. A team's order should be submitted to the Equipment Manager within three (3) days of each team being formed. Youth belts will also be ordered for all players (regular season only), see rule 2-G-9 for All-Star player information.
5. The Equipment Manager will then submit the order(s) with the goal of receiving the uniforms back in about three (3) weeks.

3. LEAGUE SCHEDULE

A. Shetland, Pinto, and Mustang Divisions

1. The League Scheduler shall determine the league practice and game schedules by division. There are only three events (practices or games) per week for Pinto and Mustang and two for Shetland scheduled by League Scheduler. An additional event may be scheduled by the manager, see section 3-C.
2. The schedule shall include the preseason practice schedule, jamboree schedule, and regular season games and practices as well as end-of-season tournament schedules for each division.
3. Pinto and Mustang teams may play a few interlock games. League Scheduler will schedule these if they are held.
4. The League Scheduler will coordinate game schedule with Umpires NW to get umpires assigned for home games.

B. Bronco and Pony Divisions

1. For Bronco division there are typically 2-4 teams, and they will play a combination of internal and interlock games. The managers of these team will arrange their own internal and interlock schedule with teams from other PONY baseball organizations (e.g., Maple Valley PONY, CVAC PONY, Seattle PONY, North Seattle PONY, West Seattle PONY, Mountlake Terrace PONY, Maltby PONY). Once their schedule stabilizes, they will coordinate with the League Scheduler and submit their game schedule to Umpires NW to get umpires assigned for home games.
2. For Pony division since there is likely only one team per season, the manager of this team will arrange through own interlock schedule with teams from other PONY baseball organizations (e.g., Maple Valley PONY, CVAC PONY, Seattle PONY, North Seattle PONY, West Seattle PONY, Mountlake Terrace PONY, Maltby PONY). Once their schedule stabilizes, they will coordinate with the League Scheduler and submit their game schedule to Umpires NW to get umpires assigned for home games.

C. Division schedules

Newcastle PONY Baseball RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

Division	Time Limit Per Practice Session (hours)	Number of Sessions Per Week (defined as any practice or game)
Shetland	2	3
Pinto	2	4
Mustang	2½	4
Bronco	2½	5
Pony	3	5
Colt/Palomino teams	Team Manager shall determine practice schedule	
All-Star teams	Shall follow time limit for their associated division	

1. Additional Practices - Managers are allowed to schedule additional practices (i.e., batting cages, position practices, etc.) beyond those scheduled by League Scheduler up to the limits above. However, such practices shall be considered voluntary, and players should not be required to participate or be subject to discipline for failing to participate. A manager who has access to additional fields or equipment is encouraged to share access with other managers. The manager must verify with league officers that NBCL has insurance coverage on the additional practice facilities before using. Field usage shall be coordinated with all Divisions.
2. Managers may start scheduling "additional practices" immediately following the initial release of schedule by League Scheduler. All field reservations must be made through the League Scheduler for fields prior to scheduled practices.
3. At least two adults (21 or over) must be present at all games, practices, and any other team functions, provided they have not been disqualified by the Board for any reason.

D. End-of-Season Tournament

1. Shetland division does not have an end-of-season tournament.
2. Pinto, Mustang and Bronco divisions do have an end-of-season tournament assuming there are enough teams. Pony division may participate in an end-of-season tournament with other non-league teams. All teams shall be included in the end-of-season tournament.
3. Tournament format is a double-elimination tournament if schedule allows; else single-elimination tournament.
 - i. Home team designation (in general): higher seeded team (1st is highest seed)
 - ii. Home team designation for Championship game: team from winner's bracket
 - iii. Home team designation for 2nd Championship game: higher seeded team (1st is highest seed)
4. Tournament seeding:
 - i. Teams will be seeded based on winning percentage.
 - ii. Tiebreakers within a division shall be determined as follows:
 - (a) Head-to-head record
 - (b) Runs allowed in head-to-head games.
 - (c) Coin flip
5. There shall be no time limit for end-of-season tournament games.
6. Games shall be scheduled 3 hours apart.

Newcastle PONY Baseball

RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

7. If a game runs beyond the 2 ½ hour limit, play shall be allowed to continue until a winner is determined, subject to all other conditions set forth for length of games, such as inclement weather conditions, safe playing conditions, darkness, etc.
8. A Board member shall be present at each end-of-season tournament game.

2. **MANAGER/COACH/PLAYER GUIDELINES**

A. Field Use and Maintenance

1. Managers, assistant coaches, or their designated representatives, shall be responsible for field set up before each game (and practice) and tear down after each game (and practice) according to the following guidelines.
2. Practices
 - i. The team manager/coaches, or their designated representatives, shall be responsible for the field teardown immediately following the practice. Field teardown shall include returning mound to the storage container, spraying water on the dirt areas of the infield (assuming the areas are not already wet and means for spraying the field is available), dragging and raking the dirt areas (base paths, home plate area, and mound) once wet, and storing the bases, and picking up trash.
 - ii. Managers shall ensure the equipment containers/field storage boxes are locked. The last manager/coach to leave a field shall be responsible for locking up the field storage boxes. The last manager/coach to leave the school site, regardless of Division, shall be responsible for locking up the equipment shed(s) and porta potty (Risdon).
3. Weekday Games
 - i. The away team manager/coaches, or their designated representatives, are responsible for the field set-up and shall arrive at least one (1) hour before game time so that the field is ready before the scheduled start time. As necessary or available, field set-up shall include spraying water on the dirt areas of the infield (assuming the areas are not already wet), dragging and raking the dirt areas (base paths, home plate area, and mound) once wet, setting the bases, marking base lines to mark the boundaries, batter's box, and required hash marks (Pinto only), setting up mound (division specific).
 - ii. The home team manager/coaches, or their designated representatives, shall be responsible for the field teardown immediately following the game. Field teardown shall include mound to the storage container, spraying water on the dirt areas of the infield (assuming the areas are not already wet and means for spraying the field is available), dragging and raking the dirt areas (base paths, home plate area, and mound) once wet, and storing the bases, and picking up trash.
 - iii. By mutual agreement prior to a game, the managers shall be allowed to share or swap the field set-up and teardown responsibilities.
 - iv. During interlock play on NBCL fields, the NBCL team will be responsible for all field maintenance outlined above.
 - v. Managers shall ensure the equipment containers/field storage boxes are locked. The last manager/coach to leave a field shall be responsible for locking up the field storage boxes. The last manager/coach to leave the school site, regardless of Division, shall be responsible for locking up the equipment shed(s) and porta potty (Risdon).
4. Weekend Games
 - i. If more than one game is scheduled on a given field, the managers/coaches, or designated representatives of the visiting team playing the first game shall be responsible for setting up the field for the first game. The managers/coaches, or designated representatives of the home team playing the first game shall be responsible for setting up the field for the next game. The duties may be shared by mutual agreement.
 - ii. For all subsequent games, except for the last scheduled game, the managers/coaches, or designated

Newcastle PONY Baseball

RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

representatives of both the home team and visiting team shall share responsibilities for setting up the field for the next game.

- iii. For the final scheduled game, the managers/coaches, or designated representatives of both the home team and visiting team shall share responsibilities for field teardown immediately following the game.
 - iv. During interlock play on NBCL fields, the NBCL team shall be responsible for all field maintenance outlined above.
 - v. Managers shall ensure the equipment containers/field storage boxes are locked. The last manager/coach to leave a field shall be responsible for locking up the field storage boxes. The last manager/coach to leave the school site, regardless of Division, shall be responsible for locking up the equipment shed(s) and porta potty (Risdon).
5. Motor Vehicles: No motor vehicles, including motorcycles and mini-tractor type vehicles shall be allowed on the field or blacktop areas at any of the fields designated for NBCL use, for any reason, unless approved by the school and the League. Exception: Board members responsible for field maintenance when acting in that capacity.

B. Uniforms/Equipment

1. Managers shall be responsible for ensuring that players are properly dressed on the playing field, in accordance with baseball rules.
2. Player uniforms shall include jersey, caps, and belts distributed by NBCL. Player baseball pants color and style are designated by Manager of the team. No substitutions or alterations shall be made to the league provided uniform items, unless approved by the Board. Items marked with another baseball league's logo, insignia or name are not permitted during games and should not be worn during practices.
3. Managers/coaches should wear league-provided caps. They may wear team/league affiliated jerseys/t-shirts but are not required to.
4. Players shall not be allowed to wear metal cleats during League play (except the Colt, and Palomino Divisions). Players found wearing metal cleats in Shetland, Pinto, Mustang, Bronco, or Pony divisions shall be required to change cleats/shoes. If no other cleats/shoes are available for use, the player is NOT eligible to play in the game or practice.
5. Each Manager is issued league equipment (e.g., catching gear, drop bases, ice packs, baseballs) by the Equipment Manager at the start of the season.
6. Managers are responsible for collecting all League equipment and returning it to the Equipment Manager at the end of their team's regular season or All-Star team season if equipment is used for an All-Star team. Failure to return the equipment by the date designated by the League may be grounds to deny that manager the opportunity to continue managing within the League. In addition, the manager may be held liable for the replacement cost of missing items.

C. Scorebooks/Line-Up Cards

1. Both teams shall provide a scorekeeper and score each game. The home team will keep the official scorebook. Official scoring of all games must be recorded in the GameChanger app by both teams. A paper scorebook may also be kept as an unofficial scoring method.
2. Candidate scorekeepers shall take training regarding how to score games in the GameChanger app. The Board will assemble and distribute the set of recommended training.
3. Candidate scorekeepers shall to the best of their ability accurately record all aspects of the game. Examples include:
 - i. Record actual lineup for both teams and not just default names for opponent.
 - ii. Update defensive alignment for both teams every inning.

Newcastle PONY Baseball

RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

- iii. If the ball in play involves an error, then record the error or errors.
 - iv. If the ball in play is fielder's choice, then record it as such.
 - v. Record all pitches thrown.
 - vi. Validate game score with scorekeeper of opposing team after each inning where runs are scored to avoid issues with misaligned scores in the later innings.
4. Regular season offensive and defensive player statistics are an input into All-Star team candidate nominations and final selection of the team roster and thus readily available and accurate statistics from GameChanger are a foundation element.
 5. Each manager shall be responsible for submitting a line-up card to the opposing manager and the umpire before the start of the game when applicable. When recording player names on the line-up card, the manager shall include the first initial, last name, and correct number of each player on the team's roster.
 6. A game shall be allowed to start with a minimum of eight (8) players. If a team does not have at least eight (8) players by the start of the game, the game shall be ruled a forfeit if at least eight (8) are not present within fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled start of the game. Should one of the eight (8) players become injured or ill during a game, and there is no substitute available, the game shall end in a forfeit. When playing with eight (8) players, one spot in the batting line-up shall be designated a dead ball out. If a ninth player arrives during the game, he/she shall be inserted in the designated spot in the order, provided he/she appears on the line-up card.
 - i. If a team is short a player or more for a game, the manager can pull up a player from the next lower NBCL division to up to the normal number of players for that division level (Pinto: 10 players, Mustang/Bronco/Pony: 9 players) to avoid a forfeit.
 - ii. Players from a higher division are NOT eligible to play for a lower division team.
 - iii. Players from within the same division are NOT eligible to play for another team in the same division.
 7. Reporting scores and pitch counts: All managers, or a designated coach, must report game scores on the league website including innings pitched and pitch count for all pitchers on both teams on game day, or the following day. If pitch count for all pitchers is not reported, the players will be assumed to have pitched the maximum number of pitches allowed in one game, and subject to rest (no pitching) for the appropriate time as set forth in Section 8-A-12. All managers, or their designated coaches, are required to report innings pitched and pitch count for any pitchers who pitch in a non-NBCL (i.e., a Select team) game or in any scrimmage game (excluding inter-squad practices). Repeated violations may be subject to forfeiture of games.

D. Managers/Coaches/Players/Spectators Rules of Conduct

1. The manager shall be responsible for the conduct of his/her coaches, fans, and players.
2. Team Meetings: It shall be the responsibility of each manager to hold a team meeting, including the parents, prior to the first practice of the season and at any other appropriate time during the season.
3. Dogs at practices or games: families shall follow rules associated with each field. NBCL has no liability for any dogs brought to league events.
4. Each player shall observe the following Player Conduct Rules or be subject to appropriate discipline, which may include immediate ejection from the game, suspension from games or season. All calls regarding player conduct are judgment calls of the umpires and can be reviewed by the Board members on a case-by-case basis.
5. Any player, coach, or manager facing disciplinary action – other than those actions taken automatically (i.e., ejection from a game for fighting) – shall have the right of appeal before the Board within 72 hours of such notice. Suspensions may be postponed pending appeal; however, if the suspension under appeal is upheld, the Board may impose an additional one-game suspension.
6. Players, coaches, and manager shall avoid:

Newcastle PONY Baseball

RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

- i. Throwing any item(s) (helmet, bat, glove, etc.) in anger.
 - ii. Using profanity, abusive or derisive language or taunting either in the dugout, on the field, or at any time when representing NBCL. Anyone caught using profanity, racial slurs, or sexual harassment shall be ejected from the game and suspended for the next scheduled game following the incident. A second incident shall result in an automatic two (2) game suspension. A third incident shall result in expulsion from NBCL.
 - iii. All negative and/or disruptive chanting, singing, yelling, clapping, kicking dirt or similar when the pitcher, having the ball, comes in contact with the pitcher's rubber.
 - (a) The first violation will result in a warning to the coaching staff.
 - (b) The second violation will result in the ejection of the Manager.
 - (c) The third and each subsequent violation will result in the ejection of the remaining coaches until such time as no coaching staff remains. The result would be a forfeit.
 - iv. Using alcoholic beverages or controlled substances at any time.
 - v. Smoking or use chewing tobacco either in the dugout, on the field, or at any time when representing NBCL.
 - vi. Leaving the dugout area or playing field during his/her game except in the case of an emergency and with the approval of the manager or coach.
 - vii. Harassing or agitating another player, or otherwise disrupting any game in progress, whether acting as a player or a spectator.
7. Fighting with any person (player, manager, coach, umpire, official, or spectator) at any time when representing NBCL. Any player caught fighting during a game shall be ejected from the game and shall also be suspended for the next two (2) scheduled games for the first incident. A second incident shall result in expulsion from NBCL.
 8. Discipline of Players: If a player is not allowed to play in a game for any reason, the manager/acting manager shall be required to notify the opposing manager, scorekeeper, and game umpire as soon as the decision is made. The manager shall also notify the Board and Registrar as soon as possible. All disciplinary action must be clearly documented in the team's scorebook. The Board shall have the right to impose further disciplinary action as stated in Section 4.
 9. Managers of both teams shall report postponed (due to weather) and incomplete games to the League Scheduler that day. The League Scheduler shall notify the Umpire Association contact of any schedule changes as soon as possible.
 10. Managers and assistant coaches shall participate in at least 70% of league activities and related responsibilities (e.g., required field workdays, practices, games, concessions, fundraising, equipment return, etc.). Failure to meet this requirement may result in the loss of the right to manage or coach the following season, at the discretion of the Board.
 11. Coaching and Scorekeeping Clinics: First-time managers and coaches shall be required to attend a mandatory coaching and scorekeeping clinic. These clinics are recommended for returning managers and coaches, but are not mandatory.
 12. Once a game begins only four coaches (manager and three assistant coaches) are allowed in the dugout and/or playing field and are the only ones allowed to interact with the ball players, other than the umpires. If any other parent, family member or coach is in the dugout once play begins, the umpire shall call time and not resume play until the unauthorized people have left the dugout and/or playing field.
 13. A team scorekeeper, identified by the manager prior to the start of the game, may be considered the fourth coach. If a manager already has three other coaches in the dugout, the scorekeeper must remain outside the dugout.

E. Discipline

Newcastle PONY Baseball

RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

1. Any Board member not directly involved in the game as a parent, coach, or manager shall have the authority to temporarily suspend a manager, coach, or player who engages in acts of physical abuse, verbal abuse, use of inappropriate language, use of tobacco products, or is suspected to be under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance.
2. The Board, by a two-thirds vote of a quorum, shall have the authority to discipline, suspend, or expel any member of any class (i.e., player, coach, manager, umpire, Board member) when the conduct of such member is considered detrimental to the best interest of NBCL and/or PONY Baseball. The member involved shall be notified of the nature of the charges and given an opportunity to respond to such charges at a special meeting scheduled for that purpose within 72 hours of the incident. The Board shall have the sole power to make a ruling and assign the consequence.
3. Any member facing disciplinary action shall have the right to appeal before the Board. Appeal of suspensions must be placed through the Board within twenty-four (24) hours of notification of proposed disciplinary action. The Board has the option to postpone a suspension, pending an appeal. However, in the event the suspension is upheld, the Board may impose an additional one-game suspension.
4. Any manager, coach, or fan ejected from a game shall automatically be suspended from their team's next scheduled game. The suspended or ejected individual shall be restricted from the premises.
5. A special meeting of the Board may be called to address disciplinary actions or appeals, at the option of the President or Vice-President.
6. If a manager or coach is expelled, he/she shall not be allowed to manage or coach for NBCL during any subsequent season, at any level, without Board approval.
7. Use of any obscenity on the field by any manager, coach or parent may result in the following:
 - i. First infraction: The offending manager, coach or parent shall be ejected from the field of play for the remainder of that game.
 - ii. Second infraction: The offending manager, coach, or parent will be ejected from that game and suspended for the next game. If the infraction occurs during the last game of the season the suspension will carry over to the end-of-season tournament games.
 - iii. Third infraction: The offending manager, coach, or parent will be ejected from that game, suspended for the season and their eligibility for future League participation will be subject to approval by the Board per Section 3-C.
 - iv. If a manager, coach, or parent who has been penalized for their conduct chooses to ignore their suspension and remain on or come back to the field or school grounds, their team will receive a forfeit for that game.
8. Every league participant has the right and authority to report situations involving profanity to the Board. The Board will investigate the incident with merit.
9. A record will be maintained in an area, electronically, for the Board to refer to for managers/coaches no longer allowed to participate in NBCL events.

4. PLAYING AND FIELD RULES

Newcastle PONY Baseball

RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

A. Shetland Division Playing Rules

1. Field Dimensions: Shetland games shall be played with a 50-foot diamond.
2. Each game shall be limited to two (2) hours or six innings, whichever comes first.
3. Managers and assistant coaches shall be allowed to circulate on the playing field for instructional purposes. Only players shall be allowed to touch the ball when in play.
4. All players shall bat each inning. The batting order shall rotate position each inning so that last batter of an inning is a different batter every inning.
5. All players may bat off a tee for the first half of the scheduled season. Starting with the first game in the second half of the season, to be mutually agreed upon by all coaches and the Board, the players may be pitched to by a coach, at the coach's option. If a player is unable to hit the ball after five pitches, the player shall be allowed to hit off a tee.
6. Every batter shall be allowed to remain on first base whether the batter is ruled safe or out. Each runner shall be allowed to advance to the next base whether the runner is ruled safe or out. A batter shall be allowed to advance to second base if the batter hits the ball past the outfielders, either on the ground or in the air. Each runner already on base shall then advance two bases. The last batter of each inning shall be allowed to run around all the bases. The defensive team should remain on the field until the last batter crosses home plate.
7. No scores will be kept during any games.
8. It is the Manager's responsibility to ensure that the Players assigned to the position of pitcher, or first base shall have the essential defensive skills to protect themselves during play.
9. For all rules not mentioned above, see [PONY Rulebook](#).

Newcastle PONY Baseball

RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

B. Pinto Division Playing Rules

1. Field Dimensions: The diamond shall be 60 feet, the pitching rubber for coach-pitch shall be 38 feet, reference 2022 PONY Rulebook, page 10.
2. A 10-foot arc shall be inscribed in front of home plate, from the first to the third base foul line. Reference: 2022 PONY Rule 9-D.
3. A commit line shall be chalked between each base, except for home plate to first base, measuring 30 feet from the next base.
4. Safety bases shall be used at 1st first base in all games and practices.
5. League games shall be six (6) innings in duration. When a game is tied at the end of regulation length, it shall go into extra innings until a decision is reached or the game is called by the umpire. Reference 2022 PONY Rule 11-C.
6. No new inning after 2 hours.
7. Pinto shall be a ten (10)-player division (with the 10th player playing in the fourth outfield position). The outfield positions shall be comprised of Left Field, Left Center, Right Center and Right Field with each of Left Center and Right Center each being on one side of Second Base. If a team has only nine (9) players available at the start of a game the tenth batter position shall not constitute an out and such team shall position its nine (9) defensive players in the traditional alignment with only three (3) outfielders. If a team has only eight (8) players available at the start of a game, the ninth and tenth batter position shall constitute one (1) automatic out and such team shall position its defense with such eight (8) players in its discretion. If a ninth or tenth player arrives after the start of a game, he/she must immediately be placed at the end of the lineup. If a player leaves or is injured during the game resulting in such team having only eight (8) players or less available, the batters will adjust to fill the empty spot and the empty spot will be considered an out during the ninth batter (and/or eighth batter, if applicable) whenever that will fall.
8. Rainouts: for practices, it will be coach's discretion. For games, it will be determined by rainout lines, field crews and/or Umpire Coordinator no later than 2 hours before the game start time or at game time by the home plate umpire (if assigned) or jointly by managers from both teams for games.
9. The Umpire Coordinator, Safety Officer or his/her designated representative, game umpire, or Board member shall have the authority to terminate a game whenever, in his/her opinion, conditions of the field are unplayable. A game shall be delayed a minimum of twenty (20) minutes before being called off. In the event that both managers and the umpire agree that the field has become unplayable prior to the twenty-minute limit, the game may be terminated earlier.
10. All players must always wear helmets while swinging a bat (before, during and after practices and games). This includes, but is not limited to, on deck, at the plate, warming up, taking practice swings, soft toss, poly balls, etc. All Catchers are required to wear a helmet/mask, even during pregame warm-ups.
11. Regulation game:
 - i. If a game is called for any reason, it shall be a complete game if four (4) innings have been completed, or if the home team has scored more runs in three (3) innings or three (3) and a fraction innings, than the visiting team has scored in four (4) completed innings. Reference: 2022 PONY Rule 11-D.
 - ii. If a game is called for any reason before it is a complete game, or when the score is tied, it shall be considered a suspended game and shall be resumed from the point of curtailment at the time scheduled by organization league officials. Reference: 2022 PONY Rule 11-E.
12. Mercy rules (game, inning):
 - i. If the visiting team is leading by at least 15 runs at the end of three (3) or 10 runs and the end of four (4) or more complete innings the game shall be declared complete, and the visiting team shall be declared the winner. If the home team is leading by at least 15 runs at the of three (3) or 10 runs and the end of four (4)

Newcastle PONY Baseball

RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

or more complete innings after the visiting team has completed batting the game shall be declared complete and the home team shall be declared the winner. Reference: 2022 PONY Rule 11-G-1.

- ii. A team will be limited to five (5) runs per inning if they are leading or tied to start their half of the inning. If a team is trailing to start their half of the inning, that team is limited to taking a five (5) run lead after their half inning. The last inning (6th inning in most cases) allows for unlimited runs for both teams. Any extra innings are also unlimited scoring.

13. Pitching approach:

i. **Pinto division official play uses coach-pitch. All End-of-Season games are coach-pitch only games.**

- (a) A batter shall be declared out after failing to hit a fair ball after six pitches are delivered by a coach-pitcher. The batter is out if there are three strikes before the sixth pitch. Missed swings are counted as strikes, as are foul balls and foul tips. A batter is not out on a foul ball or a foul tip if it is the 6th pitch; provided, however that a foul tip caught by the catcher on the third strike will be a strikeout. Reference: 2022 PONY Rule 9-F. Notwithstanding the foregoing, during the jamboree and during April, batters will get up to six swings.

ii. Player-pitch (optional approach)

- (a) Both coaches must agree to using player-pitch format for up to 3 innings in a game (regular season games only)
- (b) The pitching rubber for player-pitch shall be 40 feet, reference 2022 PONY Rulebook, page 10
- (c) Player-pitcher to start inning and will pitch until either:
 - three (3) outs are recorded in the inning.
 - maximum runs for the inning are scored, see rule 4-B-12-ii.
 - maximum of walks and/or hit batters per inning is reached. Maximum of two (2) for March-April and three (3) for May-June.
 - pitcher reaches their daily pitch count. Maximum of 20 pitches and one (1) inning during March-April, and 30 pitches and two (2) innings during May-June.
 - Once any of these constraints are reached, then the player-pitcher is replaced by coach-pitcher from the offensive team who pitches the remainder of the inning.
- (d) Coach-pitcher will call balls and strikes from behind the mound while player is pitching.
- (e) Players younger than league age 7 are NOT allowed to pitch.
- (f) If a player-pitcher pitches more than one inning in a game (May-June only), it must be consecutive innings.
- (g) Three-batter rule for player-pitchers is not in effect.

14. The player fielding the pitcher's position shall take position always to the rear of the pitching plate, and on the left or right side of the coach-pitcher with one foot in the circle. The circle will be marked in chalk approximately ten (10) feet in diameter around the pitching rubber. Coach-pitcher must remain in contact with the pitching rubber while pitching. He/she must throw the ball overhand. No kneeling or pitching from the knee is allowed. The coach-pitcher shall not direct or coach their team in any way on offense. Penalty: The coach will receive one warning and the second time the coach-pitcher must be removed. Notwithstanding the foregoing, during the jamboree and during April, the coach-pitcher may pitch from anywhere within the circle and may pitch from a knee.

15. Wooden, metal, graphite or ceramic bats manufactured for baseball play, which are round and not more than two and five eighths' inches in diameter at the thickest part, not more than 42 inches in length, are acceptable. [2022 PONY Rule 8-C] In conjunction with USA Baseball and its other participating national member organizations, PONY Baseball has adopted the new USA Baseball bat standard (USABat). Effective January 1, 2018, with the exception

Newcastle PONY Baseball RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

of the -3 bat (BBCOR certified), all other 2-5/8 inch minus factor bats (-5, -7, -9, etc.) and 2-1/4 bats must be certified with the USABat licensing stamp on the bat in order to be used for league and tournament play. Reference: 2022 PONY Rule 8-C-3.

16. The batting order shall be continuous, and include all players present and available to play in the game. Players arriving late for the game will be added to the bottom of the line-up.
17. Batters are not permitted to bunt or soft swing at the ball whether player-pitch or coach-pitch format. Penalty: pitch is a strike, and the ball is dead.
18. Any batted ball which does not touch or travel beyond the 10-foot arc will be considered a foul-strike for the purposes of this rule. Reference: 2022 PONY Rule 9-D.
19. During player-pitcher at bats, there is no stealing or advancing a base due to wild pitches or passed balls. Runners may only advance through a ball hit into play, a walk, or a hitter batter. Catcher to pitcher exchange does not allow a player to advance.
20. Base runners shall remain in contact with the base until the ball is hit. Penalty: If a runner is off the base and the ball is hit, the runner is out, and the ball is in play. If the ball is not hit, the runner must return to the base and the ball is dead. One warning per team per game.
21. Infield fly rule is NOT in effect during either player-pitch or optional coach-pitch.
22. Dropped third strike is NOT in effect during either player-pitch or optional coach-pitch.
23. Ball hits coach-pitcher; Reference: PONY rule 9.N(3)
 - i. If a batted ball hits the coach-pitcher, the ball is dead. The pitch is a foul strike, and no runners may advance.
 - ii. If a live ball hits the coach-pitcher or in the umpire's judgment the coach interferes in the fielder's attempt to make a play, the ball is dead, and the lead runner is out.
24. Whenever a play is being made at any base, runners shall make every effort to avoid contact, give themselves up, or slide into the base to avoid colliding with the defensive player.
25. Feet first sliding is required unless runner is returning to the previous base from only a few steps away.
26. **The ball is dead**, and the play shall stop once any player has control of the ball in the infield (as described as inside of the diamond outlined by the base paths from each base – 2nd to 1st and 2nd to 3rd bases – extended to the fence line including all associated foul area), raises the ball in the air, and is granted 'time' by the umpire (coach if no umpire is present), only then is the ball dead. A commit line shall be chalked between each base, except for home plate to first base, measuring 30 feet from the next base. Any runner that has advanced past the commit line before play is called dead by the umpire will be allowed to proceed to the next base if base is not occupied.
27. To help with pace of play, a 'courtesy runner' shall be allowed for the catcher. The 'courtesy runner' will be either 1) the player who recorded the last batted out if entire roster is in the lineup, or 2) a player that has yet to enter the game. If a catcher is provided a 'courtesy runner' that identified catcher must catch the next defensive inning.
28. A foul ball caught by a catcher will not be considered an out unless the catcher tries to catch the ball from a crouching to standing position and the ball reached 6' in height from the ground. When a player is pitching and catcher starts in the crouched position, all foul balls caught by catcher are outs on the third strike.
29. Players shall participate in a minimum of two (2) defensive innings in each 6-inning game (may not be possible if mercy rule is in effect). Players are to be freely substituted in defensive positions. There is a two (2) inning limit for players playing the positions of pitcher, first base and shortstop. It is encouraged that if a player starts an inning at first base, pitcher, or shortstop, they should finish the inning at that position. Should a player be moved from one of these positions during an inning, that player must finish the inning at the new position, the inning shall count against playing limits. These limits apply to extra innings. Each inning pitched counts toward defensive

Newcastle PONY Baseball RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

innings.

30. The umpire (or manager of defensive team if no umpire) shall solely make all rulings regarding runner's interference and intentional or unintentional collisions, and such rulings cannot be protested. If it is deemed by the umpire that the runner has intentionally collided with a defensive player, the runner shall be declared "out" and may be ejected from the game for unsportsmanlike conduct.
31. A player's parent or sibling shall not be allowed to umpire a game, while his/her child or sibling is pitching, without the consent of both managers.
32. For all rules not mentioned above, see [PONY Rulebook](#) and/or [Official MLB Baseball Rules](#).

Newcastle PONY Baseball

RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

C. Mustang Division Playing Rules

1. Field Dimensions: The diamond shall be 60 feet, the pitching rubber for player-pitch shall be 46 feet, reference 2022 PONY Rulebook, page 10.
2. League games shall be six (6) innings in duration. When a game is tied at the end of regulation length, it shall go into extra innings until a decision is reached or the game is called by the umpire. Reference 2022 PONY Rule 11-C.
3. No new inning after 2 hours.
4. Minimum players to start or continue game, see [Official MLB Baseball Rules](#).
5. Rainouts: For practices, it will be coach's discretion. For games, it will be determined by rainout lines, field crews and/or Umpire Coordinator no later than 2 hours before the game start time or at game time by the home plate umpire.
6. The Umpire Coordinator, Safety Officer or his/her designated representative, game umpire, or Board member shall have the authority to terminate a game whenever, in his/her opinion, conditions of the field are unplayable. A game shall be delayed a minimum of twenty (20) minutes before being called off. In the event that both managers and the umpire agree that the field has become unplayable prior to the twenty-minute limit, the game may be terminated earlier.
7. All players must always wear helmets while swinging a bat (before, during and after practices and games). This includes, but is not limited to, on deck, at the plate, warming up, taking practice swings, soft toss, poly balls, etc. All Catchers are required to wear a helmet/mask, even during pregame warm-ups.
8. Regulation game:
 - i. If a game is called for any reason, it shall be a complete game if four (4) innings have been completed, or if the home team has scored more runs in three (3) innings or three (3) and a fraction innings, than the visiting team has scored in four (4) completed innings. Reference: 2022 PONY Rule 11-D.
 - ii. If a game is called for any reason before it is a complete game, or when the score is tied, it shall be considered a suspended game and shall be resumed from the point of curtailment at the time scheduled by organization league officials. Reference: 2022 PONY Rule 11-E.
9. Mercy rules (game, inning):
 - i. If the visiting team is leading by at least 15 runs at the end of three (3) or 10 runs and the end of four (4) or more complete innings the game shall be declared complete, and the visiting team shall be declared the winner. If the home team is leading by at least 15 runs at the of three (3) or 10 runs and the end of four (4) or more complete innings after the visiting team has completed batting the game shall be declared complete and the home team shall be declared the winner. Reference: 2022 PONY Rule 11-G-1.
 - ii. A team will be limited to five (5) runs per inning if they are leading or tied to start their half of the inning. If a team is trailing to start their half of the inning, that team is limited to taking a five (5) run lead after their half inning. The last inning (6th inning in most cases) allows for unlimited runs for both teams. Any extra innings are also unlimited scoring.
10. See section 4-I for pitch count rules.
11. Three-batter rule for pitchers is not in effect.
12. Balks are NOT in effect.
13. A pitcher shall be replaced after hitting three batters in any one game.
14. Wooden, metal, graphite or ceramic bats manufactured for baseball play, which are round and not more than two and five eighths' inches in diameter at the thickest part, not more than 42 inches in length, are acceptable. [2022 PONY Rule 8-C] In conjunction with USA Baseball and its other participating national member organizations, PONY

Newcastle PONY Baseball RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

Baseball has adopted the new USA Baseball bat standard (USABat). Effective January 1, 2018, with the exception of the -3 bat (BBCOR certified), all other 2-5/8 inch minus factor bats (-5, -7, -9, etc.) and 2-1/4 bats must be certified with the USABat licensing stamp on the bat in order to be used for league and tournament play. Reference: 2022 PONY Rule 8-C-3.

15. The batting order shall be continuous, and include all players present and available to play in the game. Players arriving late for the game will be added to the bottom of the line-up.
16. Infield fly rule is IN effect, see [Official MLB Baseball Rules](#).
17. Dropped third strike is NOT in effect, see [Official MLB Baseball Rules](#).
18. Whenever a play is being made at any base, runners shall make every effort to avoid contact, give themselves up, or slide into the base to avoid colliding with the defensive player.
19. Feet first sliding is required unless runner is returning to the previous base from only a few steps away.
20. To help with pace of play, a 'courtesy runner' shall be allowed for the catcher. The 'courtesy runner' will be either 1) the player who recorded the last batted out if entire roster is in the lineup, or 2) a player that has yet to enter the game. If a catcher is provided a 'courtesy runner' that identified catcher must catch the next defensive inning.
21. Runners may steal bases but shall not leave the base they are occupying at the time of the pitch until the pitched ball has reached or passed the batter. Once the pitcher has stepped on the rubber with possession of the ball, runners who leave base before the pitched ball reaches or passes the batter shall be called out and the pitch shall be considered as a dead ball. Reference: 2022 PONY Rule 9-O-3. One warning per team per game in March-April. No warnings in May-June.
22. If the runner at 3rd base stops advancing toward home plate they must return to 3rd base, unless 1) the pitcher or catcher makes a play on them, 2) the pitcher or catcher makes a play on a player on another base, 3) the pitcher or catcher throws the ball to another fielder, or 4) the catcher overthrows the pitcher such that another fielder must play the ball.
23. Players shall participate in a minimum of two (2) defensive innings in each 6-inning game (may not be possible if mercy rule is in effect). Players are to be freely substituted in defensive positions.
24. The umpire shall solely make all rulings regarding runner's interference and intentional or unintentional collisions, and such rulings cannot be protested. If it is deemed by the umpire that the runner has intentionally collided with a defensive player, the runner shall be declared "out" and may be ejected from the game for unsportsmanlike conduct. A player's parent or sibling shall not be allowed to umpire a game, while his/her child or sibling is pitching, without the consent of both managers.
25. If a manager or coach goes onto the playing field to talk to any player or players more than once in a half inning, while the same player is pitching, a pitching change shall be made. The only exceptions to this rule shall be in case of injury, or if time is called by the opposing team or by an umpire. Reference: 2022 PONY Rule 16-D.
26. Batters are permitted to step out of the batter's box without penalty.
27. If a team has only eight (8) players available at the start of a game, the ninth batter position shall constitute one (1) automatic out and such team shall position its defense with such eight (8) players in its discretion. If a ninth player arrives after the start of a game, he/she must immediately be placed at the end of the lineup. If a player leaves or is injured during the game resulting in such team having only eight (8) players or less available, the batters will adjust to fill the empty spot and the empty spot will be considered an out during the ninth batter (or eighth batter, if applicable) whenever that will fall.
28. For all rules not mentioned above, see [PONY Rulebook](#) and/or [Official MLB Baseball Rules](#).

Newcastle PONY Baseball

RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

D. Bronco & Pony Division Playing Rules

1. Field Dimensions: The diamond shall be 70 feet and the pitching rubber for player-pitch shall be 50 feet for Bronco division. The diamond shall be 80 feet and the pitching rubber for player-pitch shall be 54 feet for Pony division. Reference 2022 PONY Rulebook, page 10.
2. League games shall be seven (7) innings in duration. When a game is tied at the end of regulation length, it shall go into extra innings until a decision is reached or the game is called by the umpire. Reference 2022 PONY Rule 11-C.
3. No new inning after 2.5 hours.
4. Minimum players to start or continue game, see [Official MLB Baseball Rules](#).
5. Rainouts: For practices, it will be coach's discretion. For games, it will be determined by rainout lines, field crews and/or Umpire Coordinator no later than 2 hours before the game start time or at game time by the home plate umpire.
6. The Umpire Coordinator, Safety Officer or his/her designated representative, game umpire, or Board member shall have the authority to terminate a game whenever, in his/her opinion, conditions of the field are unplayable. A game shall be delayed a minimum of twenty (20) minutes before being called off. If both managers and the umpire agree that the field has become unplayable prior to the twenty-minute limit, the game may be terminated earlier.
7. All players must always wear helmets while swinging a bat (before, during and after practices and games). This includes, but is not limited to, on deck, at the plate, warming up, taking practice swings, soft toss, poly balls, etc. All Catchers are required to wear a helmet/mask, even during pregame warm-ups.
8. Regulation game:
 - i. If a game is called for any reason, it shall be a complete game if five (5) innings have been completed, or if the home team has scored more runs in four (4) innings or four (4) and a fraction innings, than the visiting team has scored in five (5) completed innings. Reference: 2022 PONY Rule 11-D.
 - ii. If a game is called for any reason before it is a complete game, or when the score is tied, it shall be considered a suspended game and shall be resumed from the point of curtailment at the time scheduled by organization league officials. Reference: 2022 PONY Rule 11-E.
9. Mercy rules (game, inning):
 - i. If the visiting team is leading by at least 15 runs at the end of four (4) or 10 runs and the end of five (5) or more complete innings the game shall be declared complete, and the visiting team shall be declared the winner. If the home team is leading by at least 15 runs at the of four (4) or 10 runs and the end of five (5) or more complete innings after the visiting team has completed batting the game shall be declared complete and the home team shall be declared the winner. Reference: 2022 PONY Rule 11-G-2.
 - ii. There are no run limits per inning.
10. See section 4-I for pitch count rules.
11. Three-batter rule for pitchers is not in effect.
12. A pitcher shall be replaced after hitting three batters in any one game.
13. Balks: (Bronco) One warning per pitcher on a pitch to home plate (there are no warnings for balks on an attempted pick off of a runner), 2nd balk is called and so on. (Pony) One warning per team, subsequent balks are called. The umpire should explain the call to the pitcher and coach before proceeding with the game.
14. Wooden, metal, graphite or ceramic bats manufactured for baseball play, which are round and not more than two and five eighths' inches in diameter at the thickest part, not more than 42 inches in length, are acceptable. [2022 PONY Rule 8-C] In conjunction with USA Baseball and its other participating national member organizations, PONY

Newcastle PONY Baseball

RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

Baseball has adopted the new USA Baseball bat standard (USABat). Effective January 1, 2018, with the exception of the -3 bat (BBCOR certified), all other 2-5/8 inch minus factor bats (-5, -7, -9, etc.) and 2-1/4 bats must be certified with the USABat licensing stamp on the bat in order to be used for league and tournament play. Reference: 2022 PONY Rule 8-C-3.

15. The batting order shall be continuous, and include all players present and available to play in the game. Players arriving late for the game will be added to the bottom of the line-up.
16. Infield fly rule is IN effect, see [Official MLB Baseball Rules](#).
17. Dropped third strike is IN effect, see [Official MLB Baseball Rules](#).
18. Whenever a play is being made at any base, runners shall make every effort to avoid contact, give themselves up, or slide into the base to avoid colliding with the defensive player.
19. Feet first sliding is required unless runner is returning to the previous base from only a few steps away.
20. To help with pace of play, a 'courtesy runner' shall be allowed for the catcher. The 'courtesy runner' will be either 1) the player who recorded the last batted out if entire roster is in the lineup, or 2) a player that has yet to enter the game. If a catcher is provided a 'courtesy runner' that identified catcher must catch the next defensive inning.
21. Runners may leadoff and steal bases at any time, see [Official MLB Baseball Rules](#).
 - i. Except: A runner shall not be allowed to straight steal home plate during the pitch unless the batter bunts or attempts to bunt the ball. In the event the runner runs to home plate, but the batter did not bunt or attempt to bunt the ball, the runner shall be declared out.
22. Players shall participate in a minimum of three (3) defensive innings in each 7-inning game (may not be possible if mercy rule is in effect). Players are to be freely substituted in defensive positions.
23. The umpire shall solely make all rulings regarding runner's interference and intentional or unintentional collisions, and such rulings cannot be protested. If it is deemed by the umpire that the runner has intentionally collided with a defensive player, the runner shall be declared "out" and may be ejected from the game for unsportsmanlike conduct. A player's parent or sibling shall not be allowed to umpire a game, while his/her child or sibling is pitching, without the consent of both managers.
24. If a manager or coach goes onto the playing field to talk to any player or players more than once in a half inning, while the same player is pitching, a pitching change shall be made. The only exceptions to this rule shall be in case of injury, or if time is called by the opposing team or by an umpire. Reference: 2022 PONY Rule 16-D.
25. Field Ground Rules for Kennydale Lions park: A ball bouncing onto or carrying into basketball court (or equivalent depth) is a home run; ball carrying or bouncing into play structure (or equivalent depth) is a home run; ball over right field fence is a home run; ball off right field fence is a ball in play; ball flying or bouncing over the rock wall and staying there is a ground rule double (right field) or triple (center field).
26. Hidden ball tricks are prohibited (Bronco). If a runner is tagged off the base as a result of a hidden ball trick, then the runner shall not be called out. The primary purpose of this rule is to maintain an appropriate pace of play and managers from both teams are directed to encourage their players to return the ball immediately to the pitcher and not attempt hidden ball tricks.
27. Trophies (Bronco). Both first and second place teams shall receive trophies.
28. For all rules not mentioned above, see [PONY Rulebook](#) and/or [Official MLB Baseball Rules](#).

Newcastle PONY Baseball

RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

E. Colt/Palomino Division Rules

1. The Colt and Palomino Division shall be an all-year program.
2. Pre-formed teams will be accepted upon the approval of the Board/Registrar.
3. Pony or Colt traditional age group players will be allowed to play up in Colt or Palomino if they are part of a pre-formed high school team that will participate together in Colt or Palomino regular season play.
4. Players not coming from preformed teams may have tryouts.
5. Players are not guaranteed a spot on a team by registration alone.
6. The Colt and Palomino seasons shall start immediately after the high school season ends.
7. The Colt and Palomino regular seasons will end as determined by the Division Director, and/or Board.
8. Individual Colt and Palomino teams may continue to play beyond All Stars as a combined Colt/Palomino team.
9. After All Stars, Colt and Palomino players added to a team roster must register with the NBCL League.

F. Protested Games

1. All protests should be submitted to the Division Director within forty-eight (48) hours of a game's completion.
2. A Protest Committee shall be established, as needed, and shall be comprised of the applicable Division Director, the Player Agent, and the Umpire Coordinator (or any Board member acting as an alternate). The committee shall meet in closed session.
3. Protests shall be resolved within seventy-two (72) hours of consideration by the Protest Committee. Decisions of the committee are final.

G. Complaints (Fans)

1. All complaints from parents/fans should be submitted, in writing, to the Board through any Board member. The Board will review and determine what actions need to be taken as a result of the complaint.

H. Umpires

1. NBCL uses Umpires NW as the agency to provide umpires for its games.
2. NBCL may develop some internal umpires moving forward where these umpires are paid for umpiring games.
 - i. An umpire certification track will need to be identified by the Board.
 - ii. Umpire candidates will need to pass the certification to be paid for umpiring games.
 - iii. Umpiring rates are not yet determined.
3. In the event a manager, coach, or parent umpires a game, and that person is not a certified umpire that person shall not be entitled to compensation. They are also not allowed to manage or coach their team for that game once they have taken on the role of umpire.

Newcastle PONY Baseball RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

I. Pitch Counts

1. Pitch counts and innings pitched for non-Newcastle Baseball League games count toward Newcastle Baseball League pitch count limitations and must be reported.
2. A Pitcher (Pinto Division and above) will be limited to the following pitch schedule (see chart below). The “week” is defined as from 12:00 AM Monday morning, to 11:59 PM Sunday night.
3. A pitcher may continue to complete a batter after the pitch count is reached, but effort should be made to switch pitchers prior to the last batter if a pitcher is close to reaching his/her max pitch count. Note: This Section 3 does not modify the required rest limits and the actual pitches thrown, regardless of relying on this Section 3 to complete a batter, will be utilized to determine required rest per the below table.
4. Players playing down a division and assigned to the lower division team’s roster will be subject to pitch and inning limits for that division.
5. Players playing up a division will be subject to pitch limits based on their league age; provided, however, that the inning limits will be in accordance with the applicable division of actual play.

LEAGUE AGE	DAILY MAX PITCHES (INNINGS)	WEEKLY MAX PITCHES (INNINGS)	MINIMUM REQUIRED REST BASED ON PITCH COUNT (INNINGS)				
			0 HOURS REST	24 HOURS REST	48 HOURS REST	72 HOURS REST	96 HOURS REST
7-8 (Pinto)	20 (1) – MAR/APR 30 (2) – MAY/JUN	40 (2) – MAR/APR 60 (4) – MAY/JUN	1-20 (1)	21-30 (2)	NA	NA	NA
7-8 (Mustang)	50 (2)	100 (6)	1-20 (1)	21-35 (2)	36-50 (3)	NA	NA
9-10	75 (2)	150 (6)	1-20 (1)	21-35 (2)	36-50 (3)	51-65 (3)	>65
9-10 (Bronco)	75 (4)	150 (8)	1-20 (1)	21-35 (2)	36-50 (3)	51-65 (3)	>65
11-12	85 (4)	170 (8)	1-20 (1)	21-35 (2)	36-50 (3)	51-65 (4)	>65 (4)
13-14	95 (10)	190 (10)	1-20 (1)	21-35 (2)	36-50 (3)	51-65 (4)	>65 (>4)
15-16	95 (10)	190 (14)	1-30 (1)	31-45 (2)	46-60 (3)	61-75 (4)	>75 (>4)
17-18	105 (10)	210 (14)	1-30 (1)	31-45 (2)	46-60 (3)	61-80 (4)	>80 (>4)

Newcastle PONY Baseball

RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

Revision	Description
12-15-2022	<p>Major restructuring of the NBCL rules document.</p> <p>Significant rule changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pinto division playing rules: 1) adjusted format of play from coach-pitch only to combination of player-pitch and coach-pitch to start the development of pitchers, catchers and hitters earlier to lessen the transition of play between Pinto and Mustang divisions (see section 4-B-13), and 2) adjusted mercy run rule for innings from 5-run limit to a progressive 5-run limit to allow teams that are behind to not only catch up but take a lead within any inning of the game (see section 4-B-12). • Mustang division playing rules: 1) adjusted mercy run rule for innings from 5-run limit to a progressive 5-run limit to allow teams that are behind to not only catch up but take a lead within any inning of the game (see section 4-C-9), and 2) added Infield Fly rule (see section 4-C-16). • Team formation: 1) Added the requirement to gather more player profile information from managers/coaches to supplement player skills assessment scores for the draft process to aide all managers in making more informed drafting decisions (see section 2-C), and 2) defined player request and coach request rules for all divisions in order to address an undocumented process and apply constraints to the process for the competitive balance of the Pinto division while still enabling the process (see section 2-D), and 3) documented rules for All-Star team formation to address an undocumented process (see section 2-G).
5/29/2023	<p>Rule changes approved by Board on 4/5/2023 and incorporated formally into rules with this revision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjusted Pinto pitching rules back to coach-pitch, leaving player-pitch as an optional regular season only alternative if both coaches agree. • Adjusted Pinto rule for Ball hits coach-pitcher. • Added clarification to end of season tournament rules for who is the “home” team for each game.
1/29/2024	<p>Rule cleanup for 2024 season.</p>
12/05/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjusted Pinto such that a caught foul tip on a third strike is a strikeout. • Adjusted Pinto to define the four outfield positions to be Left Field, Left Center, Right Center and Right Field • Adjusted Mustang to override the national rule of requiring one foot to remain in the batter’s box.
April 16, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjusted pitch count rules for 9 and 10 years playing in Bronco.
May 21, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised Pinto Rules to provide that when a team has nine (9) players, they must use the traditional baseball positions with only three (3) outfielders and with eight (8) players the defense can be aligned as determined by the coaches. • Added clarification that when a player is injured or otherwise leaves the game, it is only an automatic out if it drops the number of players in the game below 9. • Revised the Pinto Rules to clarify when a ball is “killed”.
January 7, 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All: Revised such that the visiting team sets up the field and the home team is responsible for field teardown. • Bronco: Eliminated the warning for balks on an attempted pick off of a runner. • Bronco: Prohibited hidden ball tricks. • Pinto: During the jamboree and first calendar month of regular season games, batters will get up to six

Newcastle PONY Baseball
RULES AND REGULATIONS – 2025

	swings.
March 23, 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allowed pitching from within the circle and on a knee during the jamboree and April• Clarified the pitch count rules with respect to finishing the batter and rest requirements, such that actual pitches thrown is always the metric for measuring rest requirements, regardless of the pitch count when the last batter was faced.

-----End of rules-----