



McCutchanville Baseball League

Shetland Division Rules & Procedures

These rules do not contain a complete set of rules governing play in Shetland baseball, but they are the rules that all Coaches should be made aware of.

The rules governing play will be in the following order: (1) McCutchanville Shetland Division rules listed below; (2) the current year edition of the PONY Baseball Rulebook (PONY); and (3) the current edition of the Official Rules of Major League Baseball (MLB).

The purpose of the Shetland League is to provide a transitional step between the T-Ball and Rookie Leagues. This league will introduce many of the Rookie Division rules while putting an emphasis on learning fundamentals. Please help make this a fun and safe learning experience for all of the kids.

The league will be divided into two – Advanced and Instructional. The Advanced league will consist primarily of 2nd year Shetland players who already display a good foundation of catching, throwing, hitting and game play. The Instructional league will consist primarily of those players transitioning from T-Ball. Players will be assigned a league based on a preseason assessment.

1 – TEAMS

A. Teams may consist of not more than 15, nor less than 10 players on the official roster.

2 – LEGAL PLAYERS

A. Age, for league purposes, means “league age,” which is that age attained as of April 30 of the season in question. (PONY 3.B)

B. The legal age of players shall be (PONY 4.E.1):

1. Spring Season: Players of league age 5 and 6 as of April 30 of the season in question.
2. Fall Season: Players of league age 5 & 6 as of April 30 of the following year.

C. It is recommended that players have played at least one season of T-ball prior to playing in the Shetland Division.

3 – SELECTION OF PLAYERS

A. Spring Season:

1. All registered players should participate in assessments if at all possible so that all Coaches will have a better gauge of the talent of the entire league. Players will be rated on the basis of their abilities via a point system, which should reflect their skills in relation to other players in the division. Players who were not able to attend the assessments will be rated based on “known” abilities. If abilities are unknown, then the player will be given a rating of 0.
2. Instructional League: Players will be assigned to teams by the Shetland Commissioners.
3. Advanced League: A closed and confidential Draft, attended by the Head Coaches/Assistant Coaches and League Commissioner, will be held shortly following assessments.
 - a. Prior to the Draft order, any of the unassessed players will be discussed to provide ratings. In addition, players with special circumstances will be identified (i.e. siblings or travel requirements).
 - b. The Draft order will be determined by lottery. Head Coaches will draw a number out of a hat, and that number will decide in what order they select (i.e. number 1 gets first pick).
 - c. The Head Coach with the first pick will start the draft. Each following Head Coach will get one pick until the round is complete. The Draft will then continue with the Head Coaches picking players in reverse order until the 2nd round is complete. This will continue until the last course (down and back up) of picks can occur at the age level.
 - d. Siblings of the earliest player in the family selected will automatically be placed in their predetermined round in the Draft on the same team. This will be considered the Head Coach’s pick for that round unless the round is big enough for an additional pick.
 - e. **Children of Head Coaches & Assistant Coaches will automatically be placed on their team. However, this counts as their pick (or first pick) in their child’s predetermined round.**

- f. A Head Coach may change their picked player only if they indicate their desire to do so prior to the next Head Coach's decision.
- g. Trades are allowed if it is determined after the Draft is completed that a player has been inappropriately placed on a team or if there are other extenuating circumstances deeming a trade necessary. Trades must be approved by the Shetland Commissioner.

B. Fall Season:

- 1. Players will be assigned to teams by the Shetland Commissioners. No assessment will be held.

4 – EQUIPMENT

- A. For official games, game balls will be located in the shed.
- B. Bat barrels may not be more than 2 1/4 inches in diameter at the thickest part.
- C. No metal cleats are allowed at any time.
- D. Batting helmets must be worn by all batters, baserunners, players in the on-deck area, bat boys and players coaching a base. (PONY 8.E)
- E. Catchers must wear athletic supporters, protective cups, mask, chest protector and shin guards when catching behind the plate. (PONY 8.F)
 - 1. If the catcher is not catching behind the plate, they must at least wear a catcher's mask and be placed a safe distance from the batter.
- F. All players must be dressed in full uniform (hat, pants, shirts). All shirts must be tucked in.

5 – PLAYING RULES

- A. The official playing rules, with the exceptions and variations contained in these rules, shall be the “Official Rules of Major League Baseball.” (PONY 9.A)
- B. Ten (10) players shall be used defensively. Outfielders must be positioned in the outfield.
 - 1. If a team cannot field at least 10, then the catcher and/or outfielders can be left out.
 - 2. There is no forfeit rule for minimum players.
- C. The entire team roster present for the game shall bat in rotation. All players must bat in the assigned order. (PONY 9.C)
 - 1. Any player arriving after the start of the game must be added to the bottom of the batting order.
 - 2. If a player gets injured or is removed from the game and cannot return, the player's team does not take an out when that player's normal turn to bat is up.
- D. Only the batting teams coach, coach's designee, may feed the machine. This coach will also serve as the umpire making all safe/out calls, fair/foul calls, and timeouts.
 - 1. The coach running the pitching machine must keep all players at a safe distance from the machine.
- E. Up to 2 coaches from the defensive team are permitted in the outfield to coach during innings.
- F. Free substitution on defense is allowed.
- G. No player should play the same position more than 2 innings in the same game.
- H. All players should be placed in the infield at least 2 innings per game. However, coaches should keep safety in mind. If you have concerns, please address these with parents. The Catcher position can only count as an infield position 1 time per game for an individual player.
- I. All players should be placed in the outfield or sit out at least 1 inning per game.
- J. Batters will be given 5 pitches from the machine to put the ball in play. If the ball is hit foul on the 5th pitch, the batter will continue to receive pitches until the ball is missed or hit into play.
 - 1. Batters do not strike out. After an unsuccessful attempt to hit 5 pitches, the tee will be put in place and the player will swing until the ball is put into play.
 - a. Advanced League: In the 4th inning, no tee will be used. If the batter does not hit the ball after five pitches, the batter is out.

- b. Instructional League: Any child not wanting to hit off of the pitching machine can use the tee.
- K. Batters are not permitted to bunt at the ball. (PONY 9.E)
- L. If the batted ball hits the machine, cord or coach, the ball is considered dead and plays cannot be made on the runners. The batter advances to first base and all runners advance one base, even if not forced.
- M. If a batted fair ball hits a base runner that is in fair territory (even if they are standing on base – bases are considered fair territory) before the ball is touched by a defensive player, the base runner is out. (MLB 7.08.f)
- N. Base runners are not permitted to steal bases and must remain in contact with the base until the ball is hit. (PONY 9.H)
1. If the runner leaves the base early on a hit ball, it will be declared a dead ball and all players must return to their bases. The batter continues with a re-pitch.
- O. Play will end when an infielder has the ball in the infield and calls “time” and raises the ball in the air. (PONY 9.M)
1. Outfielders cannot call time, even if they are on the infield.
 2. Outfielders cannot make put outs by stepping on bases or tagging runners. Unless the outfield catches the ball in the air, all outs should be recorded by infielders.
- P. When “time” is called, a runner who has advanced more than halfway to the next base is awarded that base. Otherwise the runner must return to the previous base.
- Q. If the defense overthrows the ball, the runner may advance one base only.
- R. "Head First" slides **are not** permitted. Diving back to a base is not to be considered a "Head First" slide.
- S. No runner may purposely collide with a fielder to attempt to dislodge the ball or take a fielder out of play. If, in the umpire’s judgment, this occurred, the runner is out. (MLB 7.08.a.3)
- T. Runners must slide at 2nd, 3rd or home when there is a possibility of a play at that base. Runners should be coached on this rule, but outs will not be called. There is no sliding at 1st base.
- U. Base runners may not pass the runner ahead of them. This will result in an out.
- V. A catcher may not cause runner interference unless he has a play on the runner. The catcher must allow access to the plate unless there is a play at the plate.
- W. A missed base by the runner is by "appeal" only to the umpire. They will not automatically call a runner out if he misses a base unless the coach appeals the call to the umpire.

- X. There is no “infield fly” rule. (PONY 9.I)
- Y. If a player throws a bat in a dangerous or unsportsmanlike manner, the first time results in a warning to the coach and team. On the second offense and subsequent offenses, the batters will be called out.
- Z. Base coaches should keep the game interesting, but use discretion when running the bases. Please do not be too aggressive.

6 – LENGTH OF GAMES

- A. Games will be 4 innings long if time permits.
- B. A 1 hour, 15 minute time limit will be in effect. If the VISITING team is at bat when the time is up, the score will revert back to the last complete inning. If the HOME team is at bat, the inning shall be completed. No new inning will begin after 1 hour from the official start. If no game is scheduled to follow, then continuation of a game in progress is left to the coaches’ discretion, up to 4 innings.
- C. Innings 1 through 3 will end when the offense scores 5 runs or when the defense tallies 3 outs.
- D. Instructional League: Inning 4 will end when the defense tallies 3 outs or when each player has batted. The number of runs will not be limited, but the number of players at bat will be limited to the number of players on the team with the most players. For example, if one team has 11 players and the other team has 10, each team will get 11 turns at bat, unless the defense records 3 outs first.
 - 1. If, due to the time limit, it looks like the 4th inning will not be played, coaches are encouraged to use the “4th inning rule” in the last inning.
- E. Advanced League: Inning 4 will end when the defense tallies 3 outs or the offensive teams scores 10 runs in the inning, whichever comes first.
 - a. In the case of a tie at the end of the last inning, the team that recorded the most outs in the game, not including strikeouts, is determined the winner. If recorded outs among both teams is the same, the game will result in a tie.
- C. Each team, regardless of score, will get to bat its turn for the 4th inning or last inning.
- D. There is no mercy rule.

7 – SCHEDULE, CANCELLATIONS & MAKE-UP GAMES

- A. Scheduling of league games shall be the responsibility of the league commissioner, and shall provide not less than 11 regular season games for each team.
- B. HOME TEAM coaches should notify VISITING team within two (2) hours of the game time of any cancellation due to weather, etc.
- C. Cancellations, rain-outs, or suspended games are the responsibility of the HOME TEAM to be rescheduled. The home team has 7 days to present the visiting team 3 open dates for a possible make-up. They then have until the end of the season to get the game in. If one of the coaches feels that the other coach is not trying in good faith to get the game in, the grieved coach may contact the league commissioner, who will review the situation. In this case, if it is determined that one coach has not attempted in good faith to reschedule the game, a “win” may be given to that grieved coach and a “loss” given to the other coach.
- D. If lightning is visible, the game will be cancelled.

8 – MISCELLANEOUS

- A. The distance between the bases is 50 feet.
- B. The distance from the back of home plate to the center of the pitching machine is 35 feet.
- C. The pitching machine should be set at 34 MPH.
- D. If the pitching machine needs to be adjusted, it should be adjusted with both coaches' approval.
- E. Each game "start time" must be kept by the HOME TEAM.
- F. HOME team keeps the official scorebook and must provide someone to work the scoreboard.
- G. During the regular season, the HOME TEAM shall be responsible for reporting the game information to the league commissioner within 48 hours after the game is completed, so that records can properly maintained.
- H. HOME team prepares the field for the game.
- I. VISITING team is responsible for providing concession stand workers and for closing concessions (this includes counting receipts).