

## Pony League vs. Little League

If your child has never played on a Pony League or on any Baseball League you may be wondering what we are all about?

The primary features that distinguish Pony baseball from Little League baseball are those of a two year age bracket system and scaled diamonds. Additionally, Pony teaches lead offs and base stealing starting at age 9 (Mustang Division), or earlier while pitchers learn pick off moves and holding runners on base to counter the potential steal.

In organizations such as Little League player age can differ by as much as 3 years within a division. As a result, the younger players, because of their lack of maturity, ability and size, find it hard to communicate with the older players. They often find themselves spending a disproportionate amount of time on the bench and may feel disconnected from their team. With players of only two ages involved, as is the case with Pony baseball, it is far easier to permit every player to play more positions since the difference in skills within the age groups is not that great.

In addition, Pony baseball scales the size of the diamonds to match the physical capabilities of the players within each division. The base and pitching dimensions for Pony baseball are:

- 50 ft bases for Shetland 5 & 6 year olds
- 50 ft bases and 38 ft pitching for Pinto 7 & 8 year olds
- 60 ft bases and 44 ft pitching for Mustang 9 & 10 year olds
- 70 ft bases and 48 ft pitching for Bronco 11 & 12 year olds
- 80 ft bases and 54 ft pitching for Pony 13 & 14 year olds

These base dimensions are the result of extensive experimentation to determine the size on which players of each age group can properly play the game of baseball. Pitching distance is also scaled to the ability of the player and in proportion to the size of the diamond.

The scaled diamonds allow the players to make the plays made by major leaguers. Home runs become a possibility. Outfielders can play in a position proportionate to that played by a major leaguer. The double play, squeeze play and various strategies and tactics, difficult for adults and nearly impossible for youngsters on a full size diamond, become a probability rather than impossibility. In addition, Pony baseball uses paid (professional) umpires, rather than volunteer umpires used in Little League.

### Comparison: Pony League Baseball and Little League Baseball

|  | Pony league | Little league |
|--|-------------|---------------|
| Two Year Age groups                                    | Yes         | No            |
| Scaled Age Appropriate Diamonds                        | Yes         | No            |
| Scaled Age Appropriate Pitching Distances              | Yes         | No            |
| Play by Major League Rules                             | Yes         | No            |
| Mix of Softball and MLB Rules                          | No          | Yes           |
| Use Profession (Paid) Umpires                          | Yes         | No            |
| Limit 5-6 year olds to T Ball Only                     | No          | Yes           |
| Limit 7-8 year olds to Coach/Machine pitch             | No          | Yes           |
| Competitive baseball starting at age 7                 | Yes         | No            |
| 7-8 year olds sit out a maximum of one inning per game | Yes         | No            |

|  |     |     |
|--|-----|-----|
| Challenges Kids at every age group     | Yes | No  |
| Drafting up or down during season      | No  | Yes |
| Teaches base stealing earlier          | Yes | No  |
| Teaches Pitching sooner                | Yes | No  |
| Teaches Leading off Sooner             | Yes | No  |
| Prepares kids for High school Baseball | Yes | No  |

### **The Divisions of Pony Baseball**

Maltby Pony offers seven divisions of play in baseball. Divisions of play are based upon the player's league age and ability level. The age range for each division is posted next to the division of play. All players are evaluated and drafted to teams by the division managers. The number of teams in each division of play is based upon the number of registered players.

- Shetland - (ages 4, 5, 6)
- Pinto - Machine Pitch - (ages 7-8)
- Mustang - Player Pitch - (ages 9, 10)
- Bronco - (ages 11, 12)
- Pony - (ages 13, 14)
- Colt - (ages 15, 16)
- Palomino - (ages 17, 18)