

2014 Shetland Boys Rules

1. Game length: 3 complete innings or 1½ hour limit.
2. USE the TEE in the first three games. During practice use the tee and coach pitch. We need to help develop good swings as opposed to pitching the ball to where their bat will be. Even the more advanced players will benefit from the tee. Good swings, big hits equal fun and confidence as well. Most high school teams use tees almost every day at practice. These guys are 4-6 years old, they need it. In the third game upon agreement by both coaches you may coach pitch in the 2nd/3rd innings. This is a point of emphasis this year. If some teams coach pitch right away there is pressure to conform. Please follow these rules.
3. All teams **may** begin to Coach Pitch after or during the 3rd game: 3-5 swings, if the batter doesn't hit the ball, he hits off the tee. If coach pitches from one knee it will be less intimidating. Use multiple balls to speed it up and lobbing the ball does not help create good swings, thus throw line drives. Please remember our teams have 4-6 year old players. Some of the teams are mostly made up of 4 & 5 year olds. It is OK to use the tee for as long as necessary especially with the very young guys.
4. All players bat in the inning. Roll the order, all players should leadoff and bat last at least once during the season. If you roll the order every inning you will have 3 lead-off men and 3 home run hitters per game. For Example. Your lead-off batter will batter in the first inning will bat second in the second inning and the last batter will be the lead-off batter.
5. Last batter of the inning runs all the bases.(Home Run). Make a big deal about the home runs. Clear the dugout, have kids high five there teammates. "if you teach it and practice it, it will become habit"
6. There is no catcher. Coach catches.

7. Defensive alignment: Infielders plus a short center and the remaining players are in the outfield. Place fielders out of base paths, coaches in field to keep kids alert. Use Phrases like “ready positions” or “circle of trust” (when you step into the circle you are in ready position. To get them alert. Rotate players to different positions...Be careful with your first baseman though even though they have difficulty even getting the ball there on a fly.
8. If a player makes an out, whether on a batted ball or a tagged runner, all players remain on base and are safe. (until game 7, see below)
9. After 3rd game: 1st inning station to station on hits. 2nd & 3rd inning hit thru infield to outfield, batter will turn and go for 2nd base, and runners will advance 1-base. Coaches will stop them. Please do not run wild. We don't want balls flying around and boy's injured. There should be a practice before the 4th game where you can stress this concept of extra bases.
10. The last 3/4 games of the season, we will try to play real baseball. The younger teams can choose to keep the same format but the older teams should be playing this way by game 7. We need to get them ready for the next level and they will enjoy it as well. If a fielder makes a nice play and throws the runner out or gets a force out, he should be out. It must be explained to all the boys that this is how baseball is played. Use good judgment, if it was the boy's only solid hit all year, please reward him and his parents with a hit. Let players get doubles, triples, or home runs if the ball remains in the outfield while still not running wild. Again there should be a practice before game 7 in which these concepts can be emphasized. You **MUST** practice the boys getting out and running back to the dugout so they understand. Telling will not register with most of them.
11. No scores are kept. No records are kept.
12. Home team is responsible for setting up the bases and putting them away and **locking the box!** If you do not know how to lock the box, please ask. This was a problem last year, throughout the league. Also, if equipment breaks or is missing please email/text/call me and I will get new stuff there.

*****Planning practice ahead time, knowing the coaches that will be there, and keeping the kids moving is essential to your success. Drilling in stations with 3-4 per group will help keep them busy, focused, active, and having fun. Long lines and standing around will cause you to lose these young guys and will limit their progression. I am going to encourage we as coaches work together and share things, drills, practice ideas, etc with each other. You have to creative with these young guys and helping each other will make it all the more fun and productive.**

*****Thank and remember the ultimate goal is make sure these kids have a fun positive experience while learning the game and developing the necessary skills to be successful in baseball-Throwing, catching, running the bases, and batting. We must be a developmental league if we are to succeed.**

Dave Woodburn
dwoodburn@hotmail.com
708-717-4021