



**SPRING 2023
MORGAN HILL PONY BASEBALL
SHETLAND MAJORS DIVISION
OUTLINE OF PLAY**

In addition to the rules stated herein, all games are subject to the PONY Baseball Rules & Regulations and/or Official Rules of Major League Baseball

1) PLAYING FIELDS:

- A. Pitching Distance: Center of pitching circle. **(Machine Pitch)**
- B. Distance between bases: 50 Feet
- C. The recommended homerun fence distances:
 - (a) Foul Line: 125 ft minimum to 150 ft maximum
 - (b) Centerfield: 125 ft minimum to 150 ft maximum
- D. For the second half of the season, a 2-foot vertical line will be drawn halfway between each base to assist the umpire in determining where to place the runner when a batted ball is dead. Division Representative and Player Agent to determine when/if a specific date for this to become effective.
- E. For the second half of the season, ten foot horizontal lines will be drawn 15 feet from the base lines and second base to determine where the outfield begins and the infield ends. Division Representative and Player Agent to determine when/if a specific date for this to become effective.

2) EQUIPMENT:

- A. The Louisville Slugger UPM 45 Pitching Machine is the Official **PONY** Baseball Pitching Machine for Shetland Tournaments and is the only pitching machine approved for Shetland Tournament Play.
- B. The ball should weigh not less than 5 or more than 5 1/4 ounces & measure not less than 9 or more than 9 1/4 inches in circumference. **PONY** Officials shall have final approval on all game balls.
- C. Safety baseballs, both leather and vinyl covered bearing the emblem of **PONY BASEBALL** which are manufactured to the specifications above are the baseballs required. **RECOMMENDED:** Diamond Flexi Ball-Level 5.
- D. Tee ball bats are not authorized in Shetland Majors play. This includes all bats that say the words "T-Ball" on them or have a serial /model number that begins with TB. Bats shall have a maximum barrel diameter of 2 and 5/8".

3) PITCHING:

- A. Coach pitch will be allowed in the 1st half of the season if player does not hit machine pitch after 5 machine pitches. No more than 3 coach pitches after machine attempts. Player is out if they do not hit coach pitch.
- B. Pitching Machine ONLY during 2nd Half of Season. See Equipment 2A above.
 - (i) (Recommended settings for the machine: Power Lever = 2: Micro Adjust = 3: Release Block = 4).
- Settings may be adjusted by the Manager / Coach to achieve a good strike pitch.***
- C. The player fielding the pitcher's position shall take a position to the rear of the pitching machine and to the left or right. Player shall stay within 5 feet of pitching circles.
- D. If a batted ball strikes the pitching machine or coach pitcher and remains in fair territory, the ball is in play.
- E. If a batted ball strikes the pitching machine and goes into foul territory, the ball is dead, the batter is awarded first base and all runners advance one base.

4) PLAYING RULES:

- (a) Game length shall be five (5) innings or **1.5 hours**.
- (b) All players present will bat. Once the batting order is submitted to the scorekeeper it will not be changed, except for injury, illness or ejection.
- (c) A batted ball becomes dead when the batter reaches first or second (depending on where the ball is hit) or the batter is thrown out at first or second.
- (d) Defensive and Offensive Substitutions:
 - (i) Minimum of nine players shall be used defensively with a maximum of ten. There will be free defensive substitutions.
 - (ii) There shall be a maximum of four outfielders, stationed not less than 15 feet behind the baseline when the coach pitches the ball.
- (e) Offensive coaches will be stationed in the coach's boxes and as a coach feeding the pitching machine. The fourth coach will be in the dugout or designated area. Defensive coaches may be on the field (max 2). Defensive coaches must not come in contact with any ball that is in play.
- (f) The defensive team should try to make a baseball play on every batted ball. Runners do not advance on overthrows or thrown balls from one player to another. The total number of bases a runner may advance too is determined by the batted ball.
 - (i) Ex. A batter hits the ball to an infielder. That infielder should try to make a play at first base. There is no penalty for overthrows.
 - (ii) Outfielders should learn to throw the balls to the bases. A runner may not advance on any type of throw by the defense.

5) BATTERS:

- (a) Are not permitted to bunt. (**Penalty:** The batter shall be called back to the plate, the swing is a foul-strike, the ball is dead and no runners may advance).
- (b) The batter is out if failing to hit a fair ball after a maximum of five (5) pitches or after 3 strikes from the coach pitcher feeding the machine.
- (c) If the fifth pitch or 3rd strike is a foul ball the batter will continue to bat until they put a ball in play or the 3rd strike is not fouled.

(d) Batters may only advance as far as first base on any ball that does not cross the 15 ft line (beyond the basepath's)

(e) For the first half of the season, Batters may advance a maximum of two bases on any batted ball. For the second half of the season, batters may advance as far as possible on any ball that does cross the 15 foot line (beyond the basepath's). Division Representative and Player Agent to determine when/if a specific date for this to become effective.

6) **RUNNERS:**

(a) Runners are not permitted to steal or lead-off, and shall remain in contact with the base until the ball ***crosses the plate.***

(b) On a batted ball runners may advance as many bases as the batter is permitted to advance.

(i) Ex. A runner on first may advance to second on a hit that does not cross the 15ft line beyond the base paths.

(ii) Ex. A runner on first may advance to third or home on a ball batted past the 15 ft "outfield" line beyond the base paths even if the hitter stops at first.

(c). For the first half of the season, on a batted ball, runners may only advance two bases. For the second half of the season, on a batted ball, runners may advance until an infielder has control of the ball ***in the infield (see 1-E for where the infield begins)*** or at a base and holds the ball up. Division Representative and Player Agent to determine when/if a specific date for this to become effective. Once the ball becomes dead and in the judgment of the umpire/coach the runner has not gone entirely beyond the halfway point between the bases, the runner will be required to return to the base in which they are coming from.

7) **Game length**

(a) Teams shall change sides after three outs / 5 runs or the entire line-up has batted

(b) Maximum five (5) runs per half inning.

(c) Games will have a time limit of **1.5** hours maximum