



North Austin Optimist

TOURNAMENT RULES

TOURNAMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR 2025

- All teams must be affiliated with a recreational league and play a recreational schedule.
- Teams must abide by Pony age limits for each division and provide a team roster prior to their first game. Players are only allowed to play on one tournament team, they are not allowed to be pick up players on other teams in the tournament.
- For years, NAO has operated this tournament on the honor system. Our goal is to provide a fun, friendly, competitive tournament for recreational teams in the area.

TOURNAMENT RULES

1. This is a 3-game guarantee tournament, 2 pool games and then single elimination bracket play. First place rings and second place finalist rings will be awarded in each division.
2. Entry fee: There is a \$150 team entry fee.
3. Spectators will be charged a daily admission fee as follows: \$5 for adults. Children age 12 and under are free. The gate will take cash or credit card payments via Square with QR code.
4. Players and coaches play at their own risk. North Austin Optimist, its Board members and affiliated members will not be held responsible for any accident or injury resulting from the tournament or any incurred on our property. North Austin Optimist is not responsible for any personal injury, loss or damage to vehicles, personal property, equipment, or any contents.
5. The tournament schedule will be posted on the North Austin Optimist web site at www.naopt.com and Facebook - will be updated regularly once the tournament starts. For rainout information, please follow our Facebook page.
6. There are NO PETS allowed in the park. NO outside food or drinks will be allowed inside the gate when the NAO concession stand is open. Drinks and snacks for younger players may not be brought inside the gate. No coolers will be allowed in the park.
7. Only coaches that have team equipment in their vehicle can park in the gravel parking lot behind the Softball field. All other coaches, team reps, and scorekeepers will have to park in the main parking lot. The parking lot by the concession stand is reserved ONLY for NAO Baseball Board members, Concession Managers and Umpires that are working the tournament.

8. 2025 PONY Baseball rules and regulations (white pages) for league play shall be in effect with the following exceptions:
- a. Each team will be responsible for providing two good game balls for each game.
 - b. All games will be time limit games.
 - i. Shetland 6U time limit – 60 minutes
 - ii. Pinto 8U time limit – 1 hour 10 minutes
 - iii. Mustang 10U time limit – 1 hour 20 minutes
 - iv. Bronco 12U time limit – 1 hour 30 minutes
 - c. Pool games will be drop dead at end of game time. The pool game score will be the score at the time at the end of game time. Scores will not revert to the previous inning.
 - d. Elimination games the inning will be completed after time has run out.
 - e. If time expires while an inning is being played during an elimination game, that inning will be completed if the outcome of the game is still in question.
 - f. All games will end as soon as one team is mathematically eliminated or the home team scores the go-ahead run in the final inning of play.
 - g. In the event a pool game ends in a tie, it will count as $\frac{1}{2}$ win and $\frac{1}{2}$ loss.
 - h. In the event of a forfeited game, the official score of the game will be 15-0.
 - i. In the event an elimination game ends in a tie after time has expired, one more inning will be played. If the score is still tied after that inning has been played the following tie-breaker system will be used:
 - i. The last batter from the previous inning for the visiting team will take second base, and there will be two outs charged to the visiting team. This half of the inning will continue normally until the third out is made.
 - ii. The home team will play their half of the inning in the same manner.
 - iii. The game proceeds in this manner until a winner is determined.
 - j. There is a run rule (mercy rule)
 - i. 15 runs after 3 innings
 - ii. 10 runs after 4 innings
 - iii. 8 runs after 5 innings

- k. Bracket tie breakers for seeding purposes will be
 - i. Win / Loss Record
 - ii. Fewest Runs Allowed
 - iii. Most Runs Scored
 - iv. Head to Head
 - v. Run Differential
 - l. In elimination play the higher seed team will be the home team.
 - m. All teams will bat their entire roster.
 - n. Absolutely no suicide squeeze or suicide steal plays will be allowed. This applies to ALL divisions. In addition, a batter may not square to bunt and then swing away (i.e., slashing). The penalty for breaking either rule will be the ejection of the coach and the player.
 - o. In Mustang and Bronco, a courtesy runner may be used for the catcher with 2 outs. The courtesy runner shall be the last batted out.
 - p. There are no protests. Disputes are settled on the field. The head coach must call timeout and discuss a dispute with umpires and the tournament director. The game clock is running during this time unless the tournament director determines that time should be stopped. Disputes should be resolved quickly, and stalling will not be tolerated.
 - q. NO metal cleats are allowed.
- 9. PONY Rule bat regulations will be enforced - only USA and BBCOR Drop 3 bats are allowed. Penalty – Coaches and player ejected from game.
 - 10. The tournament director for this event is John Haller. He will be walking the complex during the tournament. His phone number is (512) 417-0881.
 - 11. The home team for each game will keep the official score book, which will be provided by NAO and will remain at the field. The home team is also responsible for keeping the pitch count during their game.
 - 12. Game cards will be completed by the umpires. Coaches are responsible for signing the game cards. If the game card is not signed within 15 minutes after the game is completed will stand as the official score. Coaches are responsible for checking the score on the game card to ensure accuracy. A signature indicates an agreement that the score written is correct and will stand.
 - 13. NAO has a zero-tolerance policy. Profanity will not be tolerated by players, coaches, or spectators and may cause immediate suspension from the tournament. Coaches are responsible for controlling players and spectators' actions during the tournament. Spectators showing unsportsmanlike conduct will be asked to leave the complex. No alcohol products or illegal drugs may be consumed anywhere within the North Austin Optimist complex.
 - 14. If a coach, player, or fan is ejected by an umpire for any reason, they will not be allowed to participate in the remainder of the game from which they were ejected.

15. All teams, coaches, and parents are asked to please clean up their dugouts and around their bleachers after each of their games. NAO takes pride in keeping our park clean and we appreciate all the help we can get.

Shetland (6U)

1. Ten defensive players will be used.
2. In the absence of a 10th player, teams must have a minimum of 9 players to start and end a game. The 10th spot in the batting order shall be automatic out. Additional players arriving late shall be added to the end of the batting order. Once the entire line up has batted through no players can be added.
3. The batter shall be called out after failing to hit the ball after three swings at the ball on the tee. Batter is not out on a foul or a foul tip unless it is the third swing.
4. A runner leaving the base too soon in the umpire's judgment is automatically out.
5. The ball is dead when returned to the infield and in the umpire's judgment play has stopped. "Baiting" by runners to induce a throw from an infielder will not be permitted.
6. The umpire will determine the position of the runners when the ball becomes dead.
7. Teams will have a 5-run per inning maximum for the first 5 innings. The 6th inning will be an open inning with a maximum of 10 runs. If additional innings are played after the 6th, all subsequent innings will be limited to 5-runs.

Pinto (8U)

1. Nine defensive players will be used.
2. In the absence of a 9th player, teams must have a minimum of 8 players to start and end a game. The ninth spot in the batting order will be an automatic out. Additional players arriving late shall be added to the end of the batting order. Once the entire line up has batted through no players can be added.
3. Each batter will be allowed six pitches or three strikes to hit a fair ball.
4. The pitching coach is not allowed to communicate with the batter, but can communicate with his base coaches.
5. A runner leaving the base too soon in the umpire's judgment is automatically out.
6. The ball is dead when returned to the infield and in the umpire's judgment play has stopped.
7. The umpire will determine the position of the runners when the ball becomes dead.
8. Teams will have a 5-run per inning maximum for the first 5 innings. The 6th inning will be an open inning with a maximum of 10 runs. If additional innings are played after the 6th, all subsequent innings will be limited to 5-runs.

Mustang Rules (10U)

1. Nine defensive players may be used.
2. In the absence of a 9th player, teams must have a minimum of 8 players to start and end a game. The ninth spot in the batting order will be an automatic out. Additional players arriving late shall be added to the end of the batting order. Once the entire line up has batted through no players can be added.
3. Teams will have a 5-run per inning maximum for the first 5 innings. The 6th inning is an open inning. If additional innings are played after the 6th, all subsequent innings will be limited to 5-runs.
4. Pitching rules will be the ones in the PONY rulebook – tournament pages. Tournament pitching records will be kept by the Umpires on the Official Score Card and in the official field scorebook. Coaches must sign off on their pitching after each game by signing the scorecard. If a coach fails to sign his game card / pitching record – whatever the umpire shows as pitches pitched will be the official record.

Mustang pitchers are allowed 30 pitches in a day, without impacting next day eligibility. The coach must declare ‘finish the batter’ at the start of the at bat for this allowance.

Bronco (12U)

1. Nine defensive players may be used.
2. In the absence of a 9th player, teams must have a minimum of 8 players to start and end a game. The ninth spot in the batting order will be an automatic out. Additional players arriving late shall be added to the end of the batting order. Once the entire line up has batted through no players can be added.
3. Teams will have a 5-run per inning maximum for the first 6 innings. The 7th inning is an open inning. If additional innings are played after the 7th, all subsequent innings will be limited to 7-runs.
4. All innings for the Bronco and Pony championship game will be open, but the mercy rule still applies.
5. Pitching rules will be the ones in the PONY rulebook – tournament pages. Tournament pitching records will be kept by the Umpires on the Official Score Card and in the official field scorebook. Coaches must sign off on their pitching after each game by signing the scorecard. If a coach fails to sign his game card / pitching record – whatever the umpire shows as pitches pitched will be the official record.

Bronco pitchers are allowed 30 pitches in a day, without impacting next day eligibility. The coach must declare ‘finish the batter’ at the start of the at bat for this allowance.