



Protect Our Nation's Youth

PONY BLUEBOOK

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A Bit of History

PONY Baseball/Softball, Inc., began with organization of the Pony League in Washington, PA in the summer of 1951. This was a transition league for 13-year-old and 14-year-old players designed to take graduates of Little League Baseball from that diamond to the regulation-size diamond. Growth of Pony League, primarily by word of mouth, was rapid, and by the end of the second season, 1952, the original six teams in Washington were joined by 505 others in 106 leagues around the country. A national tournament was conducted, and the first Pony League World Series was held that year.

Lew Hays, among the founders of the Pony League, was named Commissioner of the new league when it was incorporated for national organization in early 1953 and held that post until 1964 when he was named President.

In 1953, John Laslo, long time Mayor of Martins Ferry, Ohio, visited with Hays and discussed organization of a league similar to Pony League for 15-year-old and 16-year-old players. The purpose was to permit players in this age bracket to compete with players of like experience in their first years on the regulation diamond.

Laslo guided the development of Colt League, and in late 1959, Pony League and Colt League were merged into a single organization.

Bronco League, for 11-year-old and 12-year-old players, was organized in 1961 to permit players of this age to play the complete game of baseball. With Colt League using the regulation diamond with 90 foot base paths, Pony League uses a diamond with 80 base paths as a transition between the regulation diamond and the 70 foot diamond used in Bronco League.

In 1970 the Mustang League was developed in Fort Worth, TX using a diamond with 60 foot base paths, to provide an organizational structure for leagues for beginning players, 9-and 10-year-olds. For communities using players of 7 and 8 years of age, rules and emblems were developed for Pinto League, a very elementary form of baseball.

Thorobred League was organized in the Tampa, FL area and became a part of PONY Baseball in 1973 to provide playing opportunity for those players from 17 through 20 years of age who have not entered professional play and who retain a desire to participate in a community baseball program.

In 1977, Thorobred League age limits were expanded to include 21-year-old age players, and Palomino League was organized for players 17 and 18. The Thorobred League was discontinued as a PONY program in 1984 and re-established as Thorobred 23 and under program in 2015.

Shetland League, an instructional program for 5- and 6-year-olds, was formally adopted by PONY for the 1990 season with rules based on the experiences of a number of league organizations that had conducted play in this age group for several years.

While girls are permitted to play in any of the PONY Baseball leagues, recognizing that most girls preferred to compete in leagues with other girls, PONY Baseball provided Softball for girls leagues in 1976. The girls softball program follows the same age program as baseball, but age groups are "and under". Shetland is for players 6 and under (league age 4 is the minimum age for players in PONY Girls Softball). Pinto is for players 8 and under, Mustang for players 10 and under, Bronco for players 12 and under, Pony for players 14 and under, Colt for players 16 and under, Palomino for players 18 and under. PONY re-established the Thorobred age group for 23 and under in the softball program in 2013.

More than 500,000 players participate in the PONY organization annually.

PONY remains though emblems have changed with development of the program. The pony is still at the heart of it, even though the emblems that have represented PONY Baseball and Softball and its member leagues have undergone a number of changes since the program was founded in 1951.

Originally tied closely to the slogan, "Protect Our Nation's Youth", the first PONY emblem featured a silhouette of a rearing pony to symbolize the enthusiasm of youngsters 13 and 14 who had not yet reached physical maturity.

Gradually, the slogan around the top of the ball was dropped because it tended to complicate the manufacture of embroidered emblems, jewelry, decals and similar items. When the Pony Grads League was introduced in 1958, the simple addition of the word Grads outside and below the Pony emblem served for that league.

When Pony Grads and Colt were merged in late 1959, a common basic emblem was used containing the silhouette of the pony, which could also represent a colt. The names Pony League and Colt League were used for a short time outside of the ball but again resulted in manufacturing problems. To solve this dilemma, the silhouette of the pony or colt was reduced in size, and the words Pony and Colt were placed inside the ball. The word baseball was increased in size to make it more readable.

In 1961 when the league for 11-year-old and 12-year-old players was added, it was known first as Junior Pony League, and the word Junior was added above and outside a Pony emblem.

About the same time, July, 1961, the corporate name was changed from Pony League Baseball, Inc. to Boys Baseball, Inc., and the Boys Baseball emblem was developed and the league emblems redesigned. For the first time, the ball was mounted on a replica of home plate with the plate shaded. Soon etching and embroidery problems resulted in a final change in the emblem design. The Boys Baseball emblem remained in the home plate shape, symbolic of the headquarters as the home of the program. The background shading was changed to a solid color.

Junior Pony League had become Bronco League and that emblem, along with the Pony and Colt emblems, became diamonds instead of home plates. The league name was moved to the center of the ball; the word League replaced Baseball, and the Pony was again reduced in size and moved to the top of the ball. When Pinto, Mustang and Palomino were organized, the same league emblem was used with the new league names.

When the corporate name was again changed from Boys Baseball to PONY Baseball, Inc. in 1976, the familiar home plate emblem was retained and the words "Boys Baseball" were simply removed allowing the corporate emblem, the familiar pony on a baseball, to retain association with all of the member leagues, because the pony could be considered a pony, or a pinto, or mustang, or bronco, or colt or palomino.

In 1999 the emblems for all leagues were changed to a common emblem with a new pony head and the name of each league under it.

In 1979, to more readily identify the leagues with the age groups they serve, the word league was removed from the emblems and numbers representing the age group inserted.

With introduction of Girls Softball, it was decided to retain the same emblems for those leagues because the emblems do not contain the word baseball.

Fittingly, at the center of all of the emblems through all of the years has remained the pony, reminding us always of the basic purpose of the program, to Protect Our Nation's Youth.

The name PONY Baseball Inc. is the corporate name under which Shetland League, Pinto League, Mustang League, Bronco League, Pony League, Colt League, Palomino League and Thorobred are operated in baseball and softball.

PONY is taken from the first letters of each word in the slogan, "Protect Our Nation's Youth."

Originally suggested by boys at the Y.M.C.A. in Washington, PA the slogan was "Protect Our Neighborhood Youth," and the change to "Nation's" youth was made after the original Washington Pony League developed into a national program.

The First President Joe E. Brown, comedian, acrobat, actor, a man whose career spanned the entertainment world from vaudeville and the silent movies, through the circus, fairs and carnivals to the Broadway stage and radio and television, became the first president of Pony League when the organization was incorporated in 1953. He continued in the post until late 1964 when he retired.

A one-time minor league player, Brown was later part owner of the Kansas City Blues and in 1953 did pre-game and post-game radio interviews for the New York Yankees. He is the father of Joe L. Brown, former general manager of the Pittsburgh Pirates and was instrumental in the settling of the Dodgers at Los Angeles after their move from Brooklyn.

Likable and gregarious, Joe traveled many thousands of miles visiting G.I.s in far sections of the globe during World War II and later traveled additional thousands of miles telling the story of PONY Baseball hoping to interest adults in organizing baseball programs for young people.

One of the groups who founded the original Washington Pony League, and recognized as the principal founder of PONY Baseball/ Softball, Inc. as a national and international youth baseball organization, is Lewis W. Hays.

At the time of the founding of Pony League, Hays was Sports Editor of The Reporter newspaper, published by the Observer Publishing Company of Washington. Having served the office of Commissioner on a volunteers basis while holding down his regular duties as sports editor since 1951, he was granted a leave of absence by the Observer Company in 1954 to assume leadership of Pony League on a full-time basis.

For thirty years, until his retirement in October 1980, Hays was the chief administrator of Pony League and later of PONY Baseball Inc. He served as Commissioner until 1964, when, following the retirement of Joe E. Brown, he became President.

Born near Butler, PA, Hays graduated from Butler High School and Muskingum College at New Concord, OH. He entered professional journalism at Brownsville, PA in 1938 moving to Washington in 1946. A long time member of Kiwanis, Hays served the Washington Club as secretary for many years and is a past president of that club.

Hays was a ruling elder in the United Presbyterian Church since age 28 and had held a number of positions in the Church of the Covenant in Washington, PA, the Washington Presbytery, the Synod of Pennsylvania-West Virginia and at the national level. He was a past moderator of both the Washington Presbytery and the Pennsylvania/West Virginia Synod.

The United States Baseball Federation, (now USA Baseball), an organization encompassing all amateur baseball in the United States, selected Hays as its Chairman of the Board of Directors from 1976 through 1993. In that position, he served as a member of the U.S. Olympic Committee and helped to have baseball included as a sport in the Olympic Games.

Hays was the recipient of the Christian Business Man of the Year award and Optimist Club Man of the Year award. He had received a Citizen's Citation and an Honorary Doctorate from Washington and Jefferson College in Washington PA, the Distinguished Alumnus Award from Muskingum College, County of Washington Distinguished Citizen Award in 1981 and Knights of Columbus Special Award in 1981. He is also listed in Who's Who in America, and Who's Who in the World and in 1991, Hays was inducted into the Washington-Greene County chapter of the Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame.

When he retired, Hays was elected to a life membership on the Board of Directors of PONY Baseball/Softball, Inc. Hays passed away in 1998.

Various firms and associations within the sporting goods manufacturing and sales industry, the office of the Commissioner of Major League Baseball and numerous other firms, organizations and individuals have contributed to the growth and development of PONY Baseball/Softball, and to the young people the program serves, through the years. Most have served without monetary compensation in any form and many with little or no recognition of their contribution. Many have now passed from this life.

To all of these, and to the thousands who continue to serve, we offer this thought:

Many names and many deeds go unrecorded in minutes of meetings and reports of activities, but they are engraved on the hearts of those young people who benefit from the time, the effort, the talent you have given to them through PONY Baseball/Softball.

Equipment and Supplies

League Uniforms

Because local leagues have the autonomy to govern themselves, the league's Board of Directors should make a determination on how and where it purchases and disseminates uniforms for players and coaches.

Neither the cheapest nor the most expensive uniform is necessarily the best for your league. More costly uniforms will generally outwear cheaper ones, if the added cost represents better construction of the garment and better material and not just added trim. Above a certain point in the construction and the choice of material, uniforms are more expensive only because they have added trim, a factor which usually is not too important in league competition.

Through the [DICK'S Team Sports HQ platform](#), leagues have the opportunity to design and order their uniforms through their own local league website.

Tournament Uniforms

Many leagues maintain a separate set of uniforms for the league tournament teams, while others purchase new tournament team uniforms annually. Usually, tournament team uniforms will be worn under 20 times a year, and after a year or two, you may have a problem replacing ones that are damaged or lost. If the league is using one style of uniform for all of its teams, it may be wiser to have a new set of this style of uniform on hand that can be worked into regular league use after one or two years of use as tournament uniforms. In this manner, the tournament team will always be dressed in relatively new looking uniforms, but there is little extra expenditure of league funds required.

Remember that uniforms worn in tournament play by players and managing personnel must have the Official Tournament Team Emblem sewn to the right sleeve. Tournament uniforms should also be numbered to permit identification of your players during tournament games.

Other Equipment

Bats, balls and other equipment, to some degree, can often be purchased at reduced prices in the off-season. Place equipment orders with your suppliers in the fall or winter months when special discounts may be in effect. If you do not choose to buy all your equipment from one supplier, early shopping also permits you time to compare prices and quality and to buy more intelligently. PONY recommends [AD Starr](#) as your league's one-stop shop for all things baseball and softball.

Catchers' face masks, chest protectors and shin guards can be repaired in most instances. New sponges or foam rubber can be inserted in worn masks, and a shoe repair shop can replace damaged straps. Many sporting goods stores have the facilities to make such repairs, and some have replacement parts available.

Baseballs that are undamaged, but grass stained, can be cleaned with a thorough rubbing with a cloth or sponge dipped in canned milk.

Many athletic goods manufacturers publish literature on the proper care and storing of their products. Write and ask for such information. In addition, many sporting goods outlets have such literature available or can provide you with the information themselves. Other sources are professional recreation people or scholastic and collegiate athletic departments.

Insist that managers keep an inventory of all equipment throughout the season, reporting all losses and requesting any needed replacements at the earliest opportunity. Generally, it is wise to insist that worn out equipment be turned in when it is to be replaced with new equipment.

Above all, have someone keep a close inventory on all equipment. One of the surest ways to league bankruptcy is to permit unchecked buying by a large number of people.

Public Address System

The public address system is, in a sense, the voice of the league. It is a convenience to spectators and may pay for itself by attracting more people to your games.

Public address systems can also be dangerous. If they are freely used by every would-be sports commentator among your volunteers for personal comments and criticism, they may drive many of your spectators from the park.

When purchasing a system, seek the advice of someone who sells the equipment or check other systems in your community to determine cost, range and similar information.

After it is obtained, determine what it should be used for and who shall be permitted to operate it. Generally, the score of games can be given at half-inning intervals. The name of each batter can be announced and announcements concerning league activity can be made between games and between innings.

It is also best to use the system for the playing of the National Anthem at the start of a game and for playing recorded music before and between games.

Remember, the public address system is the voice of your league. If it spels out amateurish drivel, your league will be considered in that light. If it is handled with dignity, your league will be regarded in the same manner.

Scoreboards

Some type of scoreboard is near to being a necessity for a league. The interest of spectators can hardly be maintained when they are not aware of the score of the game being played.

A number of companies make scoreboards and leagues can spend several hundred dollars on this item. Information will be available through your sporting goods dealer.

Electric scoreboards are available in a variety of shapes and sizes and have the advantage of operation from the scorer's table rather than by another party. Although the expense may be too much for the league budget, it may be possible to have an organization or business firm purchase the board for the league and print its name on the board. Some boards can be purchased with advertising panels designed exclusively for this purpose.

Pitching Machines

Pitching machines may be classified as a luxury item and should certainly not be among the first purchases to be made by a league. For the league that finds itself in a relatively stable financial position, however, a pitching machine can be a sound investment as a training aid.

There are several pitching machines on the market in a price range from \$125 to \$1,000 and more. Your sporting goods dealer can obtain information concerning the machines for you. PONY recommends [Louisville Slugger's pitching machines](#).

A machine can be used to teach youngsters the proper swing. Once they learn that the machine has accurate control, they are less afraid to face it than they might be another youngster, or an adult, as a pitcher. In addition, the machine can be adjusted for speed and height of the pitch and can be used to give more experienced hitters batting practice.

Some leagues use pitching machines to throw short fly balls, teaching youngsters how to catch, or to throw ground balls when teaching them how to field.

A pitching machine can be a terrific time-saver eliminating the bad pitches that so often slow down a batting practice or training session.

It is a good investment, if the league can afford it.

For Safer Play

Your league may want to review items, from baseballs to bases, which are designed specifically to reduce injury in youth baseball and softball.

The use of a more compliant baseball may be advisable to help younger players learn the techniques of the game with less fear of being struck by a thrown or batted ball. There are a variety of [safety balls](#) on the market, which vary in construction, that are less rigid than the traditional baseball.

Use of face masks on batting helmets affords better facial protection and may give younger players added confidence when learning basic batting skills.

Jackets or vests are marketed to reduce the potential for injury when players are struck by the batted or thrown ball, particularly in the chest area.

Some bases are manufactured to release upon sufficient impact and may reduce the potential for ankle or knee injury when players slide into them.

A double base at first base is designed to reduce the potential for collisions between batter and fielder.

Use of such items does not totally preclude the possibility of injury. Proper instruction of batters, including evasive action, and of base-running and sliding techniques remains vital in the effort to provide a safer playing environment.

Please Pay When Ordering

Whenever possible, leagues must submit payment for supplies when the order is placed. on-line orders for supplies is available by using a MasterCard, Visa or mail in check. Where appropriate, the league treasurer can reimburse the cardholder.

Tournament Awards

In order to enhance standardization of awards at the various levels of tournament play, PONY has available a line of tournament awards that may be ordered by Field Directors for any specific level of tournament play. Cost of such awards is normally included in the tournament fee paid by host leagues.

Tips Finance and Fund Raising

Finance Committee

The task of financing the league may be delegated to a committee, or left largely in the hands of the Board of Directors under the direction of the league treasurer. A sensible budget and controlled spending are vital to the success and permanency of a league. Remember always, it is much easier to spend money than to raise it. Regardless of the far-sighted plans of other committees, they are of little value if they do not meet and confine themselves to the practicality of the budget and anticipated income. Because of this, the finance

committee or its equivalent must have a strong voice in the planning of all other committees. All monies collected should be placed in the common league treasury, and all expenses paid by the treasurer, by check wherever possible, in order that adequate financial records may be maintained.

Controlled Spending

The successful financing of your league will be determined as much by controlled spending as by your ability to raise funds. In some manner, authorization for purchase of equipment, trophies and other supplies should be limited to two or three officers, or committee chairmen. If desirable, some type of purchase order form can be duplicated and your suppliers advised not to charge any supplies for the league unless they have a purchase order to accompany their invoice.

Uniforms, balls, bats and awards should be ordered in the fall of the year so that there will be no question of delivery in time for the playing season. Ordering early, and in quantity, also saves money. Depending on your location and support you are receiving from local outlets, you may or may not want to ask for bids from several outlets before placing an annual order for equipment.

Planned Spending

You will not know if you are over-spending unless you have adopted a budget. Spending for new equipment or improvements to facilities, for awards and dinners may be greeted with enthusiasm in the excitement of a successful playing season, but may also bankrupt the league if funds are not available to pay the bills. Winning teams may deserve awards and dinners, but do they deserve them at the expense of possibly having to curtail league operation for players who will want to play next year? New uniforms or first class travel and lodging accommodations may be deserved by a winning tournament team, but expenditure of such funds may result in cancellation of plans to improve or add to playing facilities which will benefit more players in following seasons.

Spending should be planned, controlled and authorized only after consideration of the needs and priorities of the league over a long range period.

Fund Raising

The number of methods of raising money for PONY Baseball/Softball is limited only by the imagination and ambition of the adult volunteers and, of course, the amount of time they have to contribute to the program. PONY has a number of approved fundraisers. Contact Headquarters for more information.

Admission is usually not charged except at tournament contests. However, it is general practice for voluntary contributions to be made from those attending the games. The players themselves, auxiliary units and the personnel of the league may be assisted in fundraising by outside groups, such as a service club or fraternal organization who will conduct a fund drive for the league as a project for their group. In the general planning for any fundraising venture, give thought to these suggestions:

Chairman

Obtain a person not already burdened with other tasks that can and will devote energy to this specific project.

Record-Keeper

Obtain another person, also relatively free of other league activity, to keep records of the project as a project secretary, treasurer, or similar post. This person must have accurate records concerning distribution of the item or tickets to be sold and an accurate record of all monies concerned.

Publicity

As always, it is necessary to let people know you are engaged in a campaign to raise funds, what the goal of the campaign is and for what reason the money is being raised.

Objective

It is necessary to advise people why you are raising money. While it may be for general operating expenses, it is best to advise all donors. If you are raising funds for a particular item, such as a scoreboard, playing facilities, lights, etc., make it known - some of those who contribute regularly to operating expenses may be willing to contribute an extra amount for a specific project.

Goals

Set a reasonable goal and strive to obtain it. This helps provide additional incentive for workers and gives them a feeling of accomplishment when it is obtained.

Time Limit

Set a time limit on the drive. Do not allow it to drag out. Under some conditions, one day drives can be highly successful.

Organization

This is the key to any drive. Make sure all areas of the community are covered and that as little overlapping as possible occurs. Know who is to be responsible for assisting in the distribution of tickets or the item to be sold and who is responsible for seeing that all monies reach the proper person within the time limit.

Progress Reports

Reports of the progress of the drive are often an incentive to those participating and always a reminder to workers to do their part.

Prizes

Give serious thought before making a decision. Often prizes spur certain players on to extra effort, but more often they go to a player whose parent has the right connections in an office or factory. An alternative is a special treat, professional ball game, dinner, swimming pool tickets, etc. for all players who sell their quota or a pre-set amount over their quota.

If you plan to raise funds by selling a product, consider these items:

Percentage

What percentage of the selling price is a gift or profit for your organization? If it is less than 50 percent consider that your organization may be taking a lot of money out of the community. Many people would just as soon donate 50 cents to your organization, as they would pay \$1 for an item they do not really want which will bring only 40 cents to your treasury.

Display Ability

Particularly if the item to be sold is to be handled by the players in your league, is it an item they can readily display and explain to potential customers? Players are often timid salesmen, and customers, other than parents and relatives, must be attracted to the cause and the item without much necessity for salesmanship.

Appeal

Is this an item which will appeal to the general population? If you expect to sell to persons other than player's parents and relatives, items must be packaged attractively, priced relatively attractively or be of an unusual nature, something that can not be purchased locally.

Risk

How much of the league's funds are being risked if the venture flops? Can the item be obtained on consignment? Is the item perishable? Is it breakable?

Suggestions for Fundraising

Product Sales

One of the more enjoyable, easiest and most profitable ways to raise league funds is through the sale of candy. Many companies have built a terrific reputation for helping communities obtain the necessary funds to operate their community baseball and softball program through the sale of candy. If you would like more information on how to contact any or all of the official approved fundraisers contact PONY.

Tag Days

Locate the players in groups of two or more at busy corners or shopping centers in uniform with containers to receive donations. Have a tag printed with the name of your organization.

House To House Collection

Send the players to each house in an assigned area, in uniform with containers asking for donations to the organization. A Thank You card briefly expressing your gratitude, and explaining the nature and purpose of your organization should be handed to each contributor.

Car Wash Or Gas-O-Rama

Obtain the cooperation of an automobile service station or car washing firm that will permit older players or adult volunteers to man the gas pumps or wash cars for a day with the proprietor agreeing to turn over the day's profits to the league. This is good advertising for the cooperating firm, and you can even have an advance sale of tickets good for a certain amount of gas or service.

Dinners

Ham, chicken, spaghetti, pancakes and sausage and chili are a few favorites. Experienced people are often willing to lend a hand and merchants may donate a portion of the food supplies you need.

Year Books

You can have a booklet printed containing information about the league, your schedule, team rosters and/or photos and similar material, and sell advertising space to community business firms. Your real profit must be in the sale of advertising space, not in the sale of the finished product.

Park Projects

In addition to collections at games, funds may be raised at your games through sales of food and beverage items at a concession stand, by the sale of signs on the outfield fence and perhaps on your scoreboard. Remember, do not accept advertising for alcoholic beverages, tobacco or other items inconsistent with the best interests of a youth program.

Other Income Sources

Some persons or groups will simply make contributions to your league for general operating expenses or to aid in the purchase of specific equipment or to build or improve facilities. Persons making such requests should have knowledge of why the money is needed and be able to discuss what your organization is doing for the young people of your community. Remember to advise contributors that their contributions are tax deductible.

Team Sponsors

Team sponsors may be obtained for each team in your league. Sponsors should be charged a specific fee for the year, such as \$100, \$300 or another flat figure with an understanding as to what sponsorship involves. In most leagues, sponsorship ends with the contribution and the sponsor has no say in who is to manage or coach the team, nor the players to be assigned to the team. The sponsor should be guaranteed that he will not be approached for additional funds. It is the general practice to call the team by the sponsor's name ("Joe's Market" or "Rotary Club") and to place the sponsor's name on the team uniforms to give advertising value to the contribution.

Player Fees

In many leagues, each player pays an annual registration fee, which may greatly range. It is also necessary to make some arrangement for hardship cases, though this must be controlled. A possibility is to secure donations from a service club or fraternal organization to cover the fees of players who are designated hardship cases.

League Administration

Administration

PONY Baseball/Softball seeks to let each league operate as autonomously as possible. Through this Blue Book, and the PONY web site, PONY provides a pattern of operation that is the result of the experience of many leagues over an extended period of years. Actual operation of the league, however, is the responsibility of the involved people of your community.

The Constitution

The Constitution and Bylaws adopted by your league will be the basic governing document for your league and it is vital that league business be conducted within the parameters of that document. The Constitution and Bylaws may be combined in one document, or in separate documents as suggested on the following pages.

Your league will be governed by the duly elected league officers within the guidelines adopted by action of the Board of Directors.

It is important that parents, managers and coaches, sponsors and others involved in the league have some type of opportunity to address the Board to present suggestions or air complaints. It is important that persons disciplined by the Board be given an opportunity to express themselves before the Board. Election of officers should be open, announced in advance, and held at an annual meeting. To comply with the law and to remain successful and creditable, your league must make an annual financial report, and the books of the corporation should be audited annually at least by an internal audit committee. One of the surest ways to lose financial support is to be secretive or irresponsible in the handling of league finances. Open, accurate fiscal reporting can increase and attract additional financial support.

Duties of Officers

The League President will preside at meetings of the Board of Directors or Executive Committee, supervise the functions of the various committees, and in general, see that the rules, policies and principles of PONY are carried out.

The Vice President presides in the absence of the president, is an ex-officio member of all committees and carries out such other duties and assignments as may be delegated to him.

The Secretary records the minutes of meetings and handles league correspondence, including the filing of the Membership Application and other forms.

The Treasurer is charged with the collection and disbursement of league funds, keeps financial records, compiles reports on those records and prepares the league budget. From time to time the operation of a PONY organization may require legal assistance. It is well to attempt to identify a firm or individual, perhaps the parent of a player, who might be willing to offer limited advice to the league on a pro-bono basis. If such an arrangement is made in advance, it is easier to seek advice when it is needed.

The Player Agent is as important as any league officer. The responsibility of this individual is to maintain, insofar as it is legal and possible, a balance of strength among the teams of the league. The Player Agent must also constantly remind everyone connected with the program that the welfare of the players and of the league as a community project are paramount rather than a single manager or team with designs only upon winning.

The player agent should be chosen with much care, after thorough consideration of ability to do the job and for impartiality and reputation for fairness, for action without favor in dealing both with adult leaders and participants.

With the cooperation of other league officers or assistants, it is the duty of the Player Agent to conduct registration of player candidates and to arrange for and supervise the tryout sessions. The Player Agent shall supervise the distribution of players among teams, under whatever system the league uses, and shall maintain the player pool, a list of eligible player candidates who have not been selected for teams but who are available to replace players who may move, be injured or otherwise leave the program during the season.

League Contact

All materials and correspondence sent from headquarters to the league will be sent to the person designated as League Contact on the membership application form. The League Contact may be the League President, Secretary, or any person designated by the league to receive correspondence and supplies from the headquarters and Field Directors. We encourage as many members of your league, whether that be board members, coaches, parents, umpires, grounds crew, etc. to join PONY's email list [here](#) in order to stay up-to-date on PONY news around the world and to receive special offers from PONY's national partners.

Multiple League Organizations

A single community organization may operate baseball leagues for ages three through 23, and girls' softball leagues, for players from, four through 23 years of age.

It may be desirable to assign a Vice President to head each league, under the over-all supervision of a PONY organization. You may desire to name Presidents of each of the Leagues, and establish an Executive Committee or PONY group, consisting of the individual League Presidents, the PONY officers and chairmen of committees.

Your organization might look like this:

Pony Baseball Of _____ Officers: Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer Presidents of Baseball and/or Softball: Shetland, Pinto, Mustang, Bronco, Pony, Colt, Palomino, and Thoroughbred, Ladies Auxiliary Committee Chairmen: Managers, Publicity, Finance, Field & Facilities, Equipment, Umpires, By-Laws The persons named above, for example, might comprise an Executive Committee or Administrative Committee or Council or simply be known as the PONY Baseball, Inc. of _____ (your community). Each age division would be represented on this group by its age division president. In turn, each age division would select its own officers to run the affairs. The Executive or PONY Baseball/Softball body would be charged with over-all supervision of the program in the community. Generally, for example, it is advantageous for this group to handle all financing and fund-raising, rather than for each league to be seeking financial aid in the community independently (see page 21). It is generally advantageous if the purchase of equipment and supplies is made through one source rather than by each league.

Whether or not leagues will want to have their own publicity chairman or field and facility chairman and such, will vary from community to community, but in virtually all cases where a number of leagues are operating in a community, it is advisable to have one group supervising the entire operation.

Delegate Responsibility

Many leagues, particularly after a year or two of successful operation, complain of a decline in the available manpower to operate the league. The best insurance against such a situation is a delegation of responsibility that will keep as many persons involved as care to be.

Manpower is usually most available when a program is in the organizational stages. Before the initial enthusiasm wears off, see to it that every volunteer has some job to do. Working for a program makes a person feel that he or she belongs to the program, and that person will want to remain with it.

It is also good to remember that a number of interested people, who can contribute greatly to the program, will not be among the volunteers. These are, by nature, people who hesitate to step forward and offer their services, but who will respond in good manner if they are approached personally or given a job to do.

Because of the volunteer nature of the operation league officers will not be able to personally supervise every detail of operation. In working with volunteers a certain degree of latitude is a necessity. Things may not be done exactly as you would have done them, but give others responsibility and let them contribute.

If an officer insists on becoming personally involved in every detail it soon becomes a one man show and the same officer will soon be complaining of a lack of available manpower.

Incorporation-Tax Status

Your league should consult with an attorney or accountant to incorporate as a non-profit corporation. The league may apply for exempt status from payment of federal income taxes by filing Internal Revenue Service Form 1023, available from your local IRS office.

This will also insure that contributions to your organization are deductible for federal income-tax purposes under current I.R.S. regulations and will facilitate your league's application for exemption from payment of state sales tax as determined by the laws of your state.

Incorporation also gives the league a degree of permanency and stability otherwise lacking. It is a convenient means of holding title to any real or personal property that the league may own. In the absence of incorporation, property must be held in the names of individuals. Over a period of time, this may present problems due to death, withdrawal from active participation, or absence for other reasons. Title vested in a corporation remains unaffected when changes occur among the officers and directors of your organization. Incorporation also relieves, to a degree, the officers and managers of personal liability for damages as a result of injuries to individuals or damage to property.

PONY Baseball, Inc., is recognized by the U.S. Treasury Department as a charitable and educational organization under Section 501 (c) (3) of the 1954 Code.

Even after obtaining tax-exempt status, your organization may be required to file annually an I.R.S. Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax. These matters are best discussed with an attorney or accountant in your area.

Birth Certification

Dates of birth of player candidates must be certified by birth certificates whenever possible, or otherwise certified as described in the current rule book. The rule book states dates of birth of player candidates shall be certified prior to the league's first scheduled game.

If this task is done honestly and conscientiously prior to the league's first scheduled game, league administrators will save a great deal of grief. Do not wait until a protest is filed by an opposing team or a player is disqualified from tournament play because birth documents cannot be located or a player is not of the proper league age.

Playing Schedules

Playing the greatest number of games possible to schedule does not necessarily make a good schedule. Schedules that are too lengthy tend to wear down volunteers personnel. If their work in your organization is too demanding on their time, you may lose them in following years. The players themselves may tire of the game because of the constant demand of their time near the end of the summer. They also need time to participate in other recreational and family activity.

The rescheduling of postponed or unfinished games should be assigned to a specific person so managers involved will know where to go with questions concerning rescheduling. Beyond the problem of keeping in contact with players, to advise them of the date and time of rescheduled games, remember that rescheduling can have considerable effect on a team's pitching eligibility on any given day or week. This factor becomes increasingly important if it is near the end of the season and if either of the teams involved are contenders for the league title.

It is advisable to discuss rescheduling at a meeting with the team managers to advise them of the policy the league will follow. Depending on the availability of playing facilities in your community, it may be possible to set aside a specific day of the week for rescheduled games, or to simply leave some dates open in your schedule, or at the end of the schedule, for rain dates.

Duplication of your league schedule and distribution of copies to all of your players is an aide to the players, managers and coaches and may also help increase the number of spectators at your games.

For more information on PONY Baseball and Softball's Umpire Registration Program, go [here](#) or contact: PONY Baseball and Softball

Umpires
P.O. Box 225
Washington, PA 15301
(724) 225-1060

Playing Rules

The actual playing rules of baseball games in your league will be governed by Official Rules of Major League Baseball and the rules issued by PONY Baseball. PONY Softball is governed by a rule book issued by PONY Softball. Leagues often adopt local league rules as an extension of the PONY rule, providing additional detail, or, more generally, a policy or procedure to be followed by managing personnel in that league. Such rules may require managers to play each player a certain number of innings in each game; they may govern the player selection system used by the league to distribute players among the league teams, or how tournament teams will be selected, or the handling of equipment by managing personnel. Whether you include such rules and procedures in your league by-laws, or issue a separate document, it is vital that such information be made available in printed form for distribution to the team managers and coaches. Often such rules are adopted at a meeting and are recorded only in the minutes of that meeting. A manager coming into the program the following year will not be aware of such a rule if it is not available in some printed format.

When adopting local rules, it is also advisable to determine what the penalty will be for violation of the rule. Local rules, which are actually a variation from PONY rules, must be submitted to your area's Region Director for approval.

Insurance

All leagues are required to determine that accident insurance coverage is provided for all players, coaches and managers. In addition, leagues are strongly urged to obtain liability insurance coverage and accident insurance coverage for their volunteer workers. League Liability insurance coverage is mandatory with the start of the season.

Group accident policies should cover the players, manager and coach at least while participating in or traveling directly to and from scheduled games or practice sessions. The policy must also provide coverage for every player engaged in practice sessions or games during pre-season tryouts.

A legal liability policy will provide league officials protection against damages from lawsuits arising out of accidents or mishaps which occur as the result of operations necessary or incidental to the conduct of PONY activity.

While leagues are at liberty to obtain insurance coverage from any source, PONY offers a comprehensive insurance program with competitive premium costs that is highly recommended to all leagues. Participation by all leagues in a single insurance program enables the carrier to provide more accurate information to PONY relative to the nature and frequency of injury, which constitutes a most valuable source of information for the Rules Committee. Descriptive flyers regarding the PONY insurance program can be obtained from PONY Headquarters or directly from Gagliardi Insurance Services, Inc. 950 S. Bascom Avenue, Suite 3010, San Jose, CA 95128. Visit their website [here](https://www.gsportsinsurance.com/pony-baseball-softball/) (https://www.gsportsinsurance.com/pony-baseball-softball/).

The Auxiliary

A very vital part of many PONY programs is the auxiliary unit. League administrative and field activities take up a great part of the time and effort of league officials, coaches and managers. If an auxiliary is formed, it can be of very great service to the league and to their community. Some fund-raising, operation of concessions, assistance in registration and the care and maintenance of equipment are only a few of the jobs available.

The undertaking of some of these aspects of the program enables league officers and managing personnel to devote more time to the actual operation of the league.

Basically, the auxiliary should be what the name implies, a supporting unit to the league. It can be a women's group, or it can be a parents group, or it may be expanded to an even larger group that would include in its membership any persons who are interested in assisting the program.

If the auxiliary unit is expected to share the burden of league operation, it is certainly entitled to representation on league governing units, such as the executive committee. Because it is intended to be a supporting group for the league, its activities should always be subject to the approval of the league executive committee.

Two factors are essential in the organization and maintenance of an effective auxiliary. It must have responsible tasks to perform, and it ought to have some voice in league government. It is suggested the Auxiliary be considered as a committee within the league rather than incorporated separately.

League Spirit

PONY Baseball and Softball has been developed on the league basis because it is intended to be a community project. The league itself, and not any particular team or individual, should be the primary interest. Administrative decisions should be made accordingly.

Use of Name, Emblems

By virtue of their membership in PONY Baseball/Softball, leagues are entitled to limited use of the names and emblems of PONY Baseball/Softball and its league names in the conduct of league activity. Use of such names and emblems are permitted in any printed materials produced for use within the league and for signs and similar items used to identify league properties and playing facilities.

Use of such names and emblems by a third party, such as a commercial printer, trophy or emblem manufacturer, shall be limited to production of amounts specifically ordered by a member league for use within the league, for resale within the league, or at special events, such as tournaments that are hosted by a league.

Use of the names and/or emblems of PONY Baseball/ Softball and its leagues for monetary gain, fund-raising, promotion or other commercial purposes by the league or a third party shall be limited to those firms operating under a valid licensing agreement with PONY Baseball/Softball, executed through the headquarters of PONY Baseball, Inc.

Commercialization

There is no place in PONY Baseball/Softball for those whose sole object is commercial or personal gain. Sponsors' names may be included in team names, such as Kiwanis Komets or Acme Market Raiders. Advertising on team uniforms should be limited to the name of the sponsor, and this should be in letters no more than two inches high. Individuals or organizations that contribute to the program are certainly deserving of a certain amount of recognition, but those organizations or individuals who persist in exploiting their PONY affiliation for personal gain may endanger league membership in PONY Baseball/Softball, Inc.

Check Signing

In all financial transactions, be sure league checks are properly signed. Most leagues require the signature of at least two officers on all checks drawn on league accounts. Discuss the matter with your bank.

Conduct

The reputation of PONY in your community can be drastically injured by the actions of one, or of a small group of persons, on or off the playing field. Players, parents, managers, coaches, umpires and league officials all bear the responsibility of upholding the good name of the program. Public quarreling and bickering, whether over playing field situations or league administrative problems, only serve to weaken the entire organization in the community. This is a youth program designed to benefit young people. Much of the benefit they derive from it stems from the example set by the adult leaders. Be sure it is a good example.

Gift Limitations

The various state high school athletic associations in most instances will help determine the maximum value of awards and gifts which a player may receive and still retain eligibility for scholastic sports. Do not let the generosity of league officials or sponsors jeopardize any youth's scholastic eligibility. Contact school officials to determine what limitations have been prescribed by the association in your state before presenting any gifts or awards.

Honoring the Workers

One of the most rewarding, yet one of the most difficult tasks for league officials, is that of paying tribute to volunteer workers for the contributions they have made to your league.

In some instances, it is not difficult to single out one or more individuals whose efforts have been far greater than any other, and little, if any, question arises as to the suitability of recognizing such individuals.

The granting of awards or recognition in some form to those who have served your league well is little enough payment for those who have contributed to the league, in one form or another, and often is encouragement to the recipient and others to continue their efforts.

However, recognition and awards should not be given without some thought. To recognize the individual who has contributed a considerable amount of money to the league may be good, but are you neglecting others who have contributed a great deal of personal time and effort? You may recognize a manager who has established an exceptional winning record, but neglect another whose record is not as good, but who has done far more to develop the young people with whom he or she has been associated. You may heap honors upon one who has served as a volunteer grounds keeper for many years, and ignore another who has, perhaps as a league officer, labored even more years and more hours for the league in the privacy of his or her own home.

Particularly when a volunteer is lost due to unexpected death, there is often a rush to heap honors upon that individual. Think first, if it happens again next year can you repeat those honors for the next person who dies suddenly, and are you ignoring others as equally deserving simply because they continue to live?

Because of the possible pitfalls, do not simply avoid recognizing deserving individuals, but do it with thought and consideration and not on the spur of the moment.

Leagues for Beginners

Make it FUN

All of PONY Baseball/Softball, and beginners' leagues especially, should be family-oriented, Unrestricted as to the race, creed or color of participants, naturally selective according to the ability of the participants.

Family-oriented in the sense that parents and other relatives will be at the ball park with younger age players and should be encouraged to become involved in the program in your community. Involvement of parents and relatives at this stage will solve a host of manpower problems in later years.

Because many parents of younger players are involved in your program for the first time, it is highly desirable for managers and perhaps league officials to meet with them to explain how the league operates, who pays the bills, who makes the decisions, where help is needed and how to become involved.

It is equally important that team managers and league officials not require a player to devote virtually all free time to baseball or girls softball. Because younger players still require a degree of baby sitting by the parents, realize that the entire family's schedule is affected by the demands you place upon the time of the young player. While you may not burn out the enthusiasm of the player for the game, you may "burn out" the enthusiasm of the family for your league if participation becomes overly demanding before the player is able to get to and from the field by himself.

Any player of eligible age and residence should be acceptable as a player candidate for your league without restriction as to race, creed, sex or color. In leagues where a registration fee is charged, league officials are encouraged to find ways and means where financial consideration will not be a barrier to participation by those unable to pay the fee. Often service clubs or fraternal organizations will make contributions to pay the fees for such players, or perhaps players' families can be given the opportunity to work at the park in lieu of payment of fees, or perhaps someone in the league organization can assist them in finding suitable odd jobs to earn money to pay fees.

While it is essential at the earlier ages for every player be given an opportunity to play, the league should still be naturally selective in the sense that players are rewarded to some degree for display of superior skill. Additional playing time is the most used reward.

There is little incentive for a player to develop skills if there is no reward or recognition for such development. In leagues for older players, the amount of playing time will depend in large measure on the skill of the individual player, and players should learn early that if they want to play regularly, they must work to develop their individual ability.

Learn By Playing

The theory of leagues for young players is that the easiest way to teach the game of baseball or softball is to let them play the game. Teach the bare fundamentals of the game, and let it be played for fun. The players have years ahead of them to learn the finer points of the game and for constant drilling and repeated practice sessions. Let them learn to play and learn to enjoy playing before you force them into winning championships.

Beginning player's uniforms may be only a cap and T-shirt rather than full uniform. The cap and shirt are exciting to them, and they still have the thrill of getting their first full uniform at a later date. Players should be insured. In this age group, accident insurance should be purchased along with the League policy.

Practice sessions should be short and not too frequent. Do not demand too much concentration on technique before they develop a love for the game, especially within the youngest of age divisions.

If you have a shortage of managers and facilities, play the games on your regular field in the morning or early afternoon with adults or older high school students as managers. At this age level, a knowledge and love of children and patience are as important as knowledge of baseball or softball.

Training leagues can help players decide whether or not they want to continue playing baseball or softball and dedicate themselves to learning the finer points of the game. It can help develop natural talent a bit earlier, but if the league develops into nothing but another scramble for a championship, you are probably better off without it.

Too often, beginning players hear all about how hard they must work and how many sacrifices they must make to play a game they know very little about. If we let them play the game first, just for fun, and learn to enjoy the game, players may be more willing to put forth the extra effort required to develop excellence.

Managing and Coaching

Team Manager and Team Coach

The most difficult, the most challenging and generally the most rewarding position in PONY Baseball/Softball is that of a team manager or coach because they are the ones in direct contact with the players. The basic purpose of PONY, in its baseball and girls softball leagues, is to help young people develop into better adults. Young people do not walk onto a baseball/softball diamond to develop their character. They sign up to have fun, to learn and develop skills and to establish and identify themselves within their peer group. While playing for fun, however, the young people are learning how to handle their emotions and to make decisions that may well affect their attitudes for the rest of their lives. On a hot summer day when they would rather be swimming, but instead go to practice, they will begin to develop such attributes as self-discipline. When they cannot play the position they want to because the manager has decided they can be of more help to the team at another spot, they will be learning about teamwork and self-sacrifice. When they have worked long and hard to win a particular game and lose it on a lucky play by the opposition or a bad call by an umpire, but still have the guts to go out and shake their opponent's hand, they have learned more about emotional stability than they could with a year's work in a classroom.

Select Managers, Coaches with Care

No matter what high ideals are established by PONY or by your league, the success or failure of the program depends on the managers and coaches in your league. They deal directly with the players and will, more than anyone else; determine how successful the league will be in helping young people become better adults.

Managers and coaches should be more concerned with helping all of the players assigned to them develop into better ballplayers and better people, than in winning the league championship. In future years, a player may not remember how many games a team won or lost, but he or she will remember the part the manager played in "making me into who I am today," be it good or bad. The manager and coach will only be a small part of a player's growing up experience, but if it is a positive part of that experience, it may become one of the most important parts.

He or she does need to learn as much as he or she can about coaching techniques and about teaching and working with young people. Managers and coaches need to be fair, need to communicate and be willing to place their desire to teach young people above their desire to attain personal glory by winning league titles. That is not as difficult as it may sound. Generally, if a manager is fair and keeps a line of communication open with the players (listens as well as talks), and teaches them all he or she knows about the game, the rest will take care of itself.

To learn more about PONY's official coaching education program, go [here](http://ponycoaching.org) (ponycoaching.org), and to learn more about PONY's official practice planning tool Dugout Captain, go [here](https://www.dugoutcaptain.com/partnership-page-pony/) (https://www.dugoutcaptain.com/partnership-page-pony/).

The best athlete or former athlete is not necessarily the best coach or manager. The ability to teach young people, to understand their capability and potential and to tell them how to do it, is more important for the manager than the manager's ability play the game. It is a far more difficult art to be able to teach a player how to hit a baseball, than to be able to hit a baseball oneself, and it requires far more knowledge of the fundamentals of the game.

Responsibility

A manager or coach, by volunteering for the job, does not get a license to do as he or she pleases, but must accept the responsibility for the impact their action will have on the remainder of the player's life. Managers and coaches should accept the responsibility of studying not only the techniques of the game of baseball or softball, but also something of the training and development of young people.

Managers and coaches need to realize their off-hand remarks and gestures are evoking an emotion in the player, either negative or positive, which can have a serious effect on morale. Players, no matter how young, are individuals, and their emotions cannot always be dealt with in generalities. When a player fails to respond, it may be time for the manager or coach to consider whether there is a need for some individual attention before simply writing the player off as one who does not care or who has not got "it." The thought that "perhaps there is ability there, and I just haven't been able to find it is a part of the real challenge of managing and coaching youngsters in youth baseball and softball.

Learn how to become a positive coach [here](https://www.positivecoach.org/coaches) (<https://www.positivecoach.org/coaches>) with education from Positive Coaching Alliance.

As adults, we all realize the difficulty we have communicating with one another. We often do not listen attentively to each other; we can seldom repeat instructions accurately. How much more difficult it is for a youngster? The young player who fails to perform satisfactorily may simply not know what to do, when to do it, how to do it or why there is a need to do it.

As much as we all hesitate to admit it, the most difficult task for a manager or coach may be to subjugate the desire for personal glory (winning the league title) to that of teaching and helping all of the players on the team develop their talent and personalities.

Working with young people, managers and coaches should realize they are not dealing with professionals. They should concentrate on teaching the fundamentals of the game and should be concerned with the development of all of the players on their team rather than concentrating on the best nine players.

The goal should be to help players develop their talents and their personalities. Basically, players can be taught to accept the authority of the manager or coach as well as the authority of the umpire and league officials. Players can be taught to work together, learning to make the personal sacrifices that are necessary to develop effective team play.

Managers and coaches need to be encouraged to work with all of the players on their team. As they develop the abilities of substitute players, they will find the lineup does not suffer as much when those substitutes enter the game. Better players can be of value to the manager when used to help work with players of lesser ability. They can conduct some drills while the manager and coach give individual attention to players with less ability. Let the better players share their talent and learn to help others, one of life's most important lessons. Who can accuse a player of lack of interest when that player rarely gets to play and goes virtually unnoticed at practice?

Managers must determine standards of conduct for the team and advise the players of those standards or team rules and the penalty that will be invoked for violation of the standards. Discipline must be fair and constant, whether it involves the team star or the least used substitute. Particularly in leagues for younger players, it is advisable to pass this information on to parents at a team meeting. The league should begin with a well-planned, thorough try-out session in which every player has an equal opportunity to display batting, throwing, running and fielding skills.

Practice sessions should be held to a pre-determined length of time and be well organized to teach fundamentals to all players, not just a scrimmage session for the starting nine. PONY's official practice planning tool Dugout Captain can assist the first-year coach or Shetland/Pinto/Mustang coach craft well-developed practices. Visit their website [here](#).

Work With Parents, Not Against Them

Parental cooperation is vital to the success of the league. Families have other family members to consider in addition to the player. Managers should be encouraged to start and end practice sessions at a specific time. Managers and coaches who meet with their parents to explain to them the goals and plans for the season will find them more cooperative and helpful. In addition to teaching the game of baseball or softball, managers and coaches are also directly responsible for the care and handling of team equipment and

distribution, as well as the distribution and collection (possibly) of team uniforms. They may also be called upon to guide the team in a league-sponsored fundraising activity. Parents can assist in such tasks and be of valuable assistance to the manager and coach. It may be possible to select Team Ambassadors (a.k.a. Team Moms, Team Dads or Team Parents) to help remove some of the non-baseball chores from the managers and coaches.

Keep It In Prospective

All things considered, and aside from the emotional impact of winning league championships or tournaments, all we, as adults, are doing is supervising a group of young people playing a series of games. It is not a life or death matter. When it is portrayed as such to young people, our purpose has been forgotten, and the validity of the program should be questioned.

In Case of Injury

Partially because of more extensive exposure, injuries to players occur more frequently in practice than in game situations. Leagues need to give thought to a policy or plan of action to be followed by managing personnel in both game and practice situations. In most situations, emergency medical care is available, but managers and coaches need to know the number to call and the location of the nearest telephone in advance. Each team should also be equipped with a first aid kit and managers trained in basic first aid procedure.

Safety Training

Players need to be advised of the potential dangers present in the playing or practicing of the game. They need to be sure the area is clear before they swing a bat, that the other person is watching when they throw a ball, that thrown bats and head gear not only damage equipment but can injure another person. Catchers should always use a mask when warming up a pitcher, on or off the mound and players and catchers should always wear an athletic supporter with a protective cup.

The league, and more particularly the manager and coach, is responsible for the welfare and safety of the player entrusted to his or her care. Reasonable care must be taken to avoid injury. The same safety equipment needed in games is just as important in practice sessions. Players should be involved in an organized activity at all times to avoid the playing around sessions that can be dangerous.

It is important that a manager, coach or other adult be the first person present at a practice session and that no player be left alone while waiting for a ride following practice. It is advisable to have a pre-determined pickup point in a sheltered area where parents can meet players in the event a sudden rain, illness or injury that can force early cancellation of a game or practice session.

Planning the Year

While the actual playing season may last from three to five months or less, officers and directors generally find that successful operation of a PONY Baseball/Softball league requires their attention, to some degree, 12 months out of the year. Recognizing that playing dates vary and that planning will follow a somewhat different pattern, the suggestions for month-to-month activity listed here will need adjustment for your league. However you do it, do plan ahead. Select some realistic goals, whether they are building a new concession stand, having less friction between managers, or payment of bills on time and give yourself and your fellow officers and committee members a sense of direction and the opportunity to achieve a goal.

(Timeline example for Northern United States league)

September

Officers for the following season should be elected or re-elected this month. Have the Publicity Chairman release results of the election through the league's website and social media platforms. Perhaps arrangements can be made for a story on the league's website. One of the first things you will want to do is set a date for future meetings, preferably on a regular basis. Make arrangements to have bank account records changed so that the new officers can receive and disburse funds.

October

Committee chairmen should be appointed and present at this meeting. This meeting may well be a planning session for the year. Discuss desired goals and ways and means of obtaining them. Have the Finance Committee prepare a budget with these goals in mind. Equipment should be ordered after inventory has been taken and needs determined for next season.

November

Schedule player registration, tryout dates, player draft or player distribution meeting and have playing schedule worked out. If necessary, be sure playing facilities have been reserved for your season with Park, Recreation, School or other group. Determine the status of managers and coaches and, if necessary, begin search for and selection of replacements. Have the Finance Committee contact team sponsors and other revenue sources and plan any fundraising activity.

December

A not very productive month because of the holidays, but a good month for a review of your plans and goals or perhaps a social meeting to give all of you the opportunity to get to know one another a little better.

January

File the League Membership Application forms and make application for insurance coverage for players and volunteers workers and for legal liability. Advise your PONY Baseball/Softball Field Director if your league desires to host any level of tournament play. Announce player registration dates. Make plans for a meeting with all of the volunteers adults in your league, the managers and coaches, concession stand workers, umpires, auxiliary members and others. If the league has any boundary problems, check with your Field Director now. If you plan to host any level of tournament play, make necessary plans now. Send to PONY Baseball/Softball for a copy of the Tournament Operation manual.

February

Hold your general meeting this month. Outline your plans and goals to all of the personnel, details of any planned fundraising events, registration and tryout dates and dates of playing schedule. Player registration should begin this month. It is best to have at least two registration dates several weeks apart. Plan the mechanics of player registration, who will collect fees, who will check birth documents and residence requirements. Set up pre-season practice schedule. Select a fundraiser if one is needed. Make arrangements for coaching and umpire clinics.

March

Adopt league and pre-season practice schedule and discuss plans for any special days, such as opening day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July. Conduct player registration and advise player candidates of tryout dates (printed information is best). Be sure managers and coaches have been selected for all teams. If you operate concession stands see that they are cleaned and prepared for opening and that merchandise is ordered and a schedule of workers prepared. Double check on availability of umpires. Have managers contact players eligible to return from previous year to determine which may have moved or do not intend to play this year.

April

Conduct player tryouts and player draft or player distribution meeting. Push publicity for opening of your season, including distribution of playing schedule to news media, sponsors and all players and adult personnel. Make final plans for opening day ceremonies. Do you have a flag? National anthem? Is public address system operational? Electric scoreboard operational? Plumbing in concession stands and toilets in good working order? Set up work schedules for concession stands, announcers, scorekeepers, ticket takers, ball chasers, field workers, others. Appoint a Decisions Committee to handle protests during the season. Send Tournament Application form and fee to your Division Director.

May

League play begins. Determine now how tournament team manager, coach and players will be selected. Is league prepared to finance tournament team travel and food and housing expenses in the event team continues to win? It would be nice to have a league officer contact each team sponsor and bring a representative to a game when the sponsor's team is playing. Introduce the sponsor to the manager, coach and players and parents of that team. Finalize plans for any special events during season. If budget has not been completely funded will it be necessary to change any spending plans? Are the players in your league all getting an opportunity to play?

June

Plan end of season ceremonies, trophy presentations. Your Field Director will contact you concerning tournament play. Determine who will be responsible for attending tournament information meetings. Set up dates for selection of tournament team. Consider field improvements or additions you may want to make in the fall.

July

Select tournament team. See that Tournament Team Eligibility Affidavit is filled out and the birth documents for tournament players are available. Instruct Tournament Team Manager, Coach and Business Manager of funds available to them, how to use them and the type of reports the league will want. Determine and announce plans for collection of uniforms and equipment. Plan for cleaning and storing of uniforms in a clean and dry place. Leagues may need insurance for fire, theft, or water damage of uniforms and equipment in storage. Appoint a Nominating Committee to screen and secure officers for next season. Set up election of officers for your August meeting.

August

Conduct election of officers. Have books audited and other arrangements completed for concluding season. Send letters of thanks to news media, sponsors, and others who have assisted the league. Present a report of your year in office, and suggestions for improvements in league operations for next year. If you will not be serving again next year, one of the most important contributions you can make will be to see that your successor is given the advantage of your experience through suggestions and indoctrination as to the duties of the office. Your league or the overall body governing your leagues should be organized as a non-profit corporation in accordance with the laws of the state in which you will operate.

Playing Field

The Field

This section contains the actual measurements for laying out a playing field and some information on other facilities and equipment.

PONY Baseball/Softball has available upon request manufacturer's circulars describing such items as scoreboards, batting machines, concession equipment and such. These are not approved items but are passed on only for your information.

Generally, whether you want to build a complete field with all facilities or merely want to consider the practicality of buying a pitching machine for your league, you can find competent advice within your own community. Look around and find someone who is in a related field or business and ask their opinion. If it is a scoreboard, talk to school and recreation people who have scoreboards. If it is concession stand equipment, talk to someone who operates a concession stand to get their views.

While exclusive ownership or control of the playing field is the most desirable solution, PONY Baseball/Softball leagues can play on a regulation diamond with the pitching rubber and bases moved in to the appropriate distance.

In searching for available sites for field construction, do not limit yourself to level ground with good turf growth. It is often possible to find local contractors willing to support your program by grading and leveling a field site. Look for assistance.

There are people in or near your community whose help you can seek: professional recreation employees, coaches and athletic directors, employees of golf courses, cemeteries and such. Some of these people may be familiar with the problems of water drainage, turf growth and maintenance, grading, and similar matters. People employed in the construction industry are knowledgeable in such matters. Cost of construction in all cases is in direct proportion to the amount of volunteer's labor and donated materials and equipment you can obtain.

It is advisable to discuss your plans with the head of your municipal government or with park or recreation directors in the area. You may be able to qualify the project for federal or state aid that will provide for reimbursement for some of the funds expended.

Determining the cost of playing fields is difficult, if not impossible, to state with any degree of certainty due to the variance in availability of sites from one community to the next. In one community, it may be a simple matter of taking over an existing facility and modifying it to meet the specifications of Mustang, Bronco or Pony League. A regulation diamond is required for Colt and Palomino Leagues.

Softball leagues do not use a raised pitching mound, but portable pitching mounds are available that may make a field useable for both baseball and softball play. Diamonds with bases set at 50 feet are used by Shetland and Pinto baseball. Girls Softball Shetland, Pinto in both Slow Pitch and Fast Pitch bases are 55 feet. Bases are 60 feet for softball Bronco Slow Pitch, and Fast Pitch Mustang, Bronco, Pony, Colt, Palomino, Thorobred and for Mustang baseball. Girls Softball Slow Pitch base distance for Bronco, Pony, Colt, Palomino and Thorobred is 65 feet.

Bronco diamonds, with 70-foot base distance, and Pony baseball diamonds, with 80 foot base paths, are also usable for softball when the bases are moved into the proper distance and portable mounds are used for baseball play.

If you plan to build a concession stand, for example, check the local trade unions. Sometimes apprentice carpenters, brick layers, electricians and others are willing to lend a hand as a community project.

Contractors are often willing to donate an earth moving machine and an operator, industries may donate a welder and equipment, or a service or civic group may be willing to send its members out for a day of labor as a project.

Dugouts, Backstops, Fences

Dugouts should be protected by wire screen to prevent the possibility of foul tips entering. One method is to screen the dugout and locate the entrance-exit at the end farthest away from home plate.

Dugouts may be erected above or partially below ground and may be constructed of brick, block, wood or any other desirable material, or they may be a bench located behind a fence. If possible, a drinking fountain should be located in or near each dugout and, if financially feasible, separate rest rooms for the use of players and umpires are desirable.

Backstops are designed in size and shape in proportion to the job they are expected to do. Field specifications state the approximate distance backstops should be located behind home plate. Also to be considered is the factor of protecting spectators sitting behind home plate. The surrounding topography will in part determine whether or not the backstop should have a top. It may be worth the added expense in order to save baseballs if foul-tipped balls are likely to be lost in the surrounding area. On the other hand, a top all but eliminates the possibility of catchers making put-outs by catching foul pop-ups.

Foul lines in the outfield may be chalk or similar material. The skinned infield is more readily adaptable for use by different age groups.

Fences should be six to eight feet in height and higher where necessary to protect spectators. If you intend to sell advertising space on the fence, hang vinyl banners strapped by zip ties. Sign boards can be hung on a wire fence but may present a hazard to players.

Lighting, Parking, Water

Questions concerning field lighting are best discussed with a representative of your local power company. Firms that produce outdoor lighting fixtures can also supply some or all of the answers as to how much light you need and in what form.

Parking space is a necessity if other parking facilities are not already available within reasonable distance. Limit parking to areas where foul balls are not apt to break windshields, if possible.

If the league plans to use the field for tournament play, or on similar occasions will want to charge admission, you will need to think in terms of a control fence far enough away from the field to prohibit spectators from viewing games without paying for tickets.

A water supply is a necessity for drinking purposes and for watering your field, concession stand use and toilet facilities. Rest rooms are a necessity if there are none located nearby, particularly if you plan to use the field for tournament play.

Your sporting goods outlet and people employed in recreation and athletics can probably provide you with information concerning the purchase of bleachers, or a local contractor may be able to help you construct suitable seating facilities.

Plan and Budget

Thousands of dollars can be spent on playing facilities, the same as on any other type of construction. Determine what type of facility you desire, the probable cost, and compare it with the funds available and what you anticipate can be raised. It is not necessary to complete the facility the first year. You may use benches in place of a regular dugout, adding regular dugouts at a later date. The same is true with lights for night play, fencing, seating, and even the concession stand. Try to plan the facility completely before construction begins in order to allow for later improvements without tearing up the original construction any more than is absolutely necessary.

If you plan to use the facility for high level tournament play, you may want to include such items as a press box and box seats for special guests.

The more complete the facility, the more of an asset it is to your community and your program, but keep it within the budget. Before investing too heavily, have a legal source check your title or right to use the land

over an extended period of years. Verbal agreements may suddenly become worthless if the benefactor dies and the property concerned goes into an estate or if the property is sold.

Diamonds to Fit Players

PONY Baseball/Softball believes that rather than change the rules of baseball or softball to make it possible for young people to play the game, it is more logical to change the size of the diamonds, to adjust them to the physical potential of the players. Use of diamonds matched to their capabilities permits younger players to play in the same proportionate position as the Major Leaguers and to make the same plays as a Major Leaguer. The double play, the squeeze play, the force play, all becomes probabilities instead of remote possibilities.

If it were not for the transition diamond used in Pony League, the 12-year-old would be asked to move from a 70 foot diamond to a 90 foot diamond and cover almost twice the number of square feet of playing area than in the previous year.

Infielders and outfielders will select their defensive positions in relationship to the anticipated speed of the ball when they field it. On a diamond that is too large for their peers, they will move in. The first and third base players move in front of their bases, the outfielders play disproportionately closer to the infield than a Major Leaguer. In one sense, all that a transition diamond involves is to move the bases in closer to home plate to match the defensive positions taken by the fielders. In doing so, the distance between the outfielder and the baselines, and the position of the infielders relative to the bases, is in direct proportion to that assumed by Major League players and permits younger players to play the game as it was designed to be played.

Baseball

1. Colt - Palomino Baseball 16-and under and 18-and under
 Bases: 90 feet
 Pitching: 60 feet 6 inches
 Recommended distance to center: 300 feet
2. Pony League Baseball 14-and under
 Bases: 80 feet
 Pitching: 54 feet
 Recommended distance to center: 275 feet
3. Bronco League Baseball 12-and under
 Bases: 70 feet
 Pitching: 50 feet
 Recommended distance to center: 225 feet
4. Mustang League Baseball 10-and under
 Bases: 60 feet
 Pitching: 46 feet
 Recommended distance to center: 175 feet
5. Pinto League Baseball 8-and under
 Bases: 60 feet
 Pitching: 38 feet
 Recommended distance to center: 175 feet
6. Shetland League Baseball 6-and under
 Bases: 50 feet
 Pitching: (Coaches pitch from 38 feet)
 Recommended distance to center: 175 feet

Girl's Softball

Fence Distances-Fastpitch

Shetland Girls 6-Under
Pinto Girls 8-Under
Mustang Girls 10-Under
Bronco Girls 12-Under
Pony Girls 14-Under
Colt Girls 16-Under
Palomino Girls 18-Under
Thoroughbred Girls 23-Under

Minimum

150 ft. (45.72m)
150 ft. (45.72m)
150 ft. (45.72m)
175 ft. (53.34m)
175 ft. (53.34m)
175 ft. (53.34m)
175 ft. (53.34m)
175 ft. (53.34m)

Maximum

175 ft. (53.34m)
175 ft. (53.34m)
175 ft. (53.34m)
200 ft. (60.96m)
200 ft. (60.96m)
200 ft. (60.96m)
200 ft. (60.96m)
200 ft. (60.96m)

Fence Distances-Slowpitch

Shetland Girls 6-Under
Pinto Girls 8-Under
Mustang Girls 10-Under
Bronco Girls 12-Under
Pony Girls 14-Under
Colt Girls 16-Under
Palomino Girls 18-Under
Thoroughbred Girls 23-Under

Minimum

150 ft. (45.72m)
150 ft. (45.72m)
150 ft. (45.72m)
175 ft. (53.34m)
175 ft. (68.58m)
175 ft. (68.58m)
175 ft. (68.58m)
175 ft. (68.58m)

Maximum

175 ft. (53.34m)
175 ft. (53.34m)
175 ft. (53.34m)
200 ft.. (60.96m)
200 ft. (60.96m)
200 ft. (60.96m)
200 ft. (60.96m)

200 ft. (60.96m)

Base Distances-Fastpitch

Shetland Girls 6-Under
Pinto Girls 8-Under
Mustang Girls 10-Under
Bronco Girls 12-Under
Pony Girls 14-Under
Colt Girls 16-Under
Palomino Girls 18-Under
Thoroughbred Girls 23-Under

Distances

55 ft. (16.76m)
55 ft. (16.76m)
60ft. (18.29m)
60ft. (18.29m)
60ft. (18.29m)
60ft. (18.29m)
60 ft. (18.29m)
60 ft. (18.29m)

Base Distances-Slowpitch

Shetland Girls 6-Under
Pinto Girls 8-Under
Mustang Girls 10-Under
Bronco Girls 12-Under
Pony Girls 14-Under
Colt Girls 16-Under
Palomino Girls 18-Under
Thoroughbred Girls 23-Under

Distances

55 ft. (16.76m)
55 ft. (16.76m)
60ft. (18.294m)
65ft. (19.81m)
65 ft. (19.81m)
65 ft. (19.81m)
65 ft. (19.81m)
65 ft. (19.81)

Pitching Distances-Fastpitch

Shetland Girls 6-Under
Pinto Girls 8-Under
Mustang Girls 10-Under
Bronco Girls 12-Under
Pony Girls 14-Under
Colt Girls 16-Under
Palomino Girls 18-Under
Thoroughbred Girls 23-Under

Distances

40 ft. (12.19m)
40 ft. (12.19m) -- Player Pitch: 30 ft. (9.14 m)

35 ft. (10.67m)
40 ft. (12.19m)
43 ft. (13.11m)
43 ft. (13.11m)
43 ft. (13.11m)
43 ft. (13.11m)

Pitching Distances-Slowpitch

Shetland Girls 6-Under
Pinto Girls 8-Under
Mustang Girls 10-Under
Bronco Girls 12-Under
Pony Girls 14-Under
Colt Girls 16-Under
Palomino Girls 18-Under
Thoroughbred Girls 23-Under

Distances
40 ft. (12.19m)
40 ft. (12.19m)
40 ft. (12.19m)
46 ft. (14.02m)
50 ft. (15.24m)
50 ft. (15.24m)
50 ft. (15.24m)
50 ft. (15.24m)

League Specifications

Shetland and Pinto League

Specifications

Shetland Bases-50 feet (15.17m) Pinto Bases-60 feet (18.28m)
Pitching:-38 feet (11.52m)
(See chart on pages 33 - 35 for Girls Softball dimensions)

Fair Play Area -Within the first base and third base foul lines and a fence or marked line 150 feet (45.5m) from home plate. A ball hit beyond that distance on the fly will be a home run. A minimum home run distance of 125 feet (37.92m) or a maximum of 200 feet (60.66m) will be recognized, with the recommendation that the home run distance be 150 feet at the foul lines and 200 feet in center field to a six or eight foot barrier wherever possible.

Bases, Plates -The home plate, the pitcher's rubber and the bases shall be official size as used in regulation baseball. Pitching Mound -Baseball -Shall be raised by a gradual slope to a height of four inches above the level of home plate and the base paths. -Softball - The top of the pitcher's plate shall be level with the ground.

Restraining Line-Located along first base, beginning 25 feet from home base and extending three feet beyond the first and second base line. The line, paralleling the first base foul line and extending three feet (36 inches) into foul territory, shall be marked with chalk or other white material two inches wide.

Distance to Backstop -Recommended distance from home plate to the backstop is 20 feet.

Catcher's Box -By local option, the catcher's box may be rectangular in shape 43 inches wide and eight feet deep from the point of home plate or it may be triangular in shape extending eight feet from the rear of home plate, being a continuation of the foul lines, in which case the line closest to the backstop shall be 16 feet in length.

Mustang League

Specifications

Bases-60 feet (18.29m)

Pitching:-46 feet (16.12m)

(See chart on pages 33 - 35 for Girls Softball dimensions)

Fair Play Area -Within the first base and third base foul lines and a fence or marked line 175 feet (53.08m) from home plate. A ball hit beyond that distance on the fly will be a home run. A minimum home run distance of 175 feet (53.34m) or a maximum of 225 feet (68.25m) will be recognized, with the recommendation that the home run distance be 175 feet at the foul lines and 225 feet in center field to a six or eight foot barrier wherever possible.

Bases, Plates -The home plate, the pitcher's rubber and the bases shall be official size as used in regulation baseball.

Pitching Mound-Baseball -Shall be raised by a gradual slope to a height of four inches above the level of home plate and the base paths. Softball - The top of the pitcher's plate shall be level with the ground.

Restraining Line-Located along first base beginning 30 feet from home base and extending three feet beyond the first and second base line. The line, paralleling the first base foul line and extending three feet (36 inches) into foul territory, shall be marked with chalk or other white material two inches wide.

Distance to Backstop -Recommended distance from home plate to the backstop is 20 feet.

Catcher's Box -By local option, the catcher's box may be rectangular in shape 43 inches wide and eight feet deep from the point of home plate or it may be triangular in shape extending eight feet from the rear of home plate, being a continuation of the foul lines, in which case the line closest to the backstop shall be 16 feet in length.

Bronco League

Specifications

Bases-70 feet (21.34m)

Pitching-50 feet (14.63m)

(See chart on pages 33 - 35 for Girls Softball dimensions)

Fair Play Area-Within the first base and third base foul lines and a fence or marked line 200 feet (60.66m) from home plate. A ball hit beyond that distance on the fly will be a home run. A minimum home run distance of 175 feet (53.34m) or a maximum of 275 feet (83.82m) will be recognized, with the recommendation that the home run distance be 225 feet (68.55m) at the foul lines and 275 feet in center field to a six or eight foot barrier wherever possible.

Bases, Plates -The home plate, the pitcher's rubber and the bases shall be official size as used in regulation baseball.

Pitching Mound -Shall be raised by a gradual slope to a height of six inches above the level of home plate and the base paths.

Restraining Line -Located along first base, beginning 35 feet from home base and extending three feet beyond the first and second base line. The line, paralleling the first base foul line and extending three feet (36 inches) into foul territory, shall be marked with chalk or other white material two inches wide.

Distance to Backstop -Recommended distance from home plate to the backstop is 30 feet.

Catcher's Box -By local option, the catcher's box may be rectangular in shape 43 inches wide and eight feet deep from the point of home plate or it may be triangular in shape extending eight feet from the rear of home plate, being a continuation of the foul lines, in which case the line closest to the backstop shall be 16 feet in length.

Pony League

Specifications

Bases-80 feet (24.38m)

Pitching-54 feet (16.46m)

(See chart on pages 33 - 35 for Girls Softball dimensions)

Fair Play Area-Within the first base and third base foul lines and a fence or marked line 250 feet (76.20m) from home plate. A ball hit beyond that distance on the fly will be a home run. A minimum home run distance of 200 feet (60.96m) or a maximum of 300 feet (91.44m) will be recognized, with the recommendation that the home run distance be 265 (80.77m) feet at the foul lines and 315 feet (96.01m) in center field to a six or eight foot barrier wherever possible.

Bases, Plates -The home plate, the pitcher's rubber and the bases shall be official size as used in regulation baseball.

Pitching Mound-Shall be raised by a gradual slope to a height of eight inches above the level of home plate and the base paths.

Restraining Line-Located along first base, beginning 40 feet from home base and extending three feet beyond the first and second base line. The line, paralleling the first base foul line and extending three feet (36 inches) into foul territory, shall be marked with chalk or other white material two inches wide.

Distance to Backstop -Recommended distance from home plate to the backstop is 40 feet.

Catcher's Box -By local option, the catcher's box may be rectangular in shape 43 inches wide and eight feet deep from the point of home plate or it may be triangular in shape extending eight feet from the rear of home plate, being a continuation of the foul lines, in which case the line closest to the backstop shall be 16 feet in length.

Colt, Palomino and Thoroughbred League

Specifications

Bases-90 feet (27.43m)

Pitching-60 feet, six inches(18.44m)

(See chart on pages 33 - 35 for Girls Softball dimensions)

Fair Play Area-Within the first base and third base foul lines and a fence or marked line 300 feet (91.44m) from home plate. A ball hit beyond that distance on the fly will be a home run. A minimum home run distance of 250 feet (76.20m) or a maximum of 350 feet (106.68m) will be recognized, with the recommendation that the home run distance be 300 feet at the foul lines and 350 feet in center field to a six or eight foot barrier wherever possible.

Bases, Plates -The home plate, the pitcher's rubber and the bases shall be official size as used in regulation baseball.

Pitching Mound -Shall be raised by a gradual slope to a height of ten inches above the level of home plate and the base paths.

Restraining Line-Located along first base, beginning 45 feet from home base and extending three feet beyond the first and second base line. The line, paralleling the first base foul line and extending three feet (36 inches) into foul territory, shall be marked with chalk or other white material two inches wide.

Distance to Backstop -Recommended distance from home plate to the backstop is 50 feet.

Catcher's Box -By local option, the catcher's box may be rectangular in shape 43 inches wide and eight feet deep from the point of home plate or it may be triangular in shape extending eight feet from the rear of home plate, being a continuation of the foul lines, in which case the line closest to the backstop shall be 16 feet in length.

Publicity

Community Interest

Success of any PONY Baseball/Softball program is largely dependent on the interest of the community. Interest can be aroused and maintained by education of your league constituency and the general public and the dissemination of news to it. This is the task of the publicity committee.

It all starts with your league's website and social media accounts. Leagues that do not keep their websites and social media up-to-date with important information and fresh content lose credibility with the local community and often times irritate parents, coaches and umpires. On the other hand, when utilized effectively, a league's website and social media accounts are the most valuable tools for informing, recruiting and retaining families to your league.

Choose your committee members wisely. They should be responsible, dedicated and of high moral character. Nothing can ruin a league's reputation faster than vulgar, defaming or threatening comments online in today's world. Depending upon your league's size, keep this committee relatively small. One person should not be bombarded with everything. Instead, spread the work load among the committee members.

The first job of a publicity committee member is to know the product you are attempting to publicize. For this reason, the publicity director should be thoroughly familiar with the local league and the entire PONY Baseball/Softball operation.

Website

If your league has not already done so, PONY recommends you to start a website with DICK'S Team Sports HQ/Blue Sombrero. Learn more about the platform [here](https://www.bluesombrero.com/pony) (bluesombrero.com/pony). For website training, go [here](https://www.bluesombrero.com/pony-training) (<https://www.bluesombrero.com/pony-training>).

Social Media

Please review [PONY's social media manual](#) for leagues.

Working with Local Media

Also of prime importance is a full realization of the potential outlets within the community or area in which league news can be publicized.

These most often times include local newspapers, weekly and daily; and local radio and television stations. Make a local media member database that lists the person's name, affiliation, email address and Twitter handle. Update this database once a year and make sure it is sure among the publicity committee.

What you are trying to accomplish impacts the manner in which you should contact the news media. If it is to share an exceptional game or play within a game. Usually posting photos and/or videos with a Facebook status or Tweet, and tagging the media member, is enough for them to share/retweet it.

For news stories, high-impact feature stories, event announcements, etc., it is better to reach out to news outlets personally and in advance, if possible. When you contact a media member, have the courtesy to arrange an appointment beforehand if at all possible. News people are busy people. You will be asking for their help. The easiest way to get off on the wrong foot with them is to interrupt them when they are working on important news articles.

Educate publicity outlets in regards to your intentions/hopes. The amount of publicity you can acquire for special events will in large measure be determined by the importance of the event you are attempting to publicize and the amount of effort and ingenuity you are willing to put into your presentation. If the event really is not news, you can hardly expect your publicity outlets to become very excited about it. Remember, their job is the gathering and dissemination of news, and not to simply publicize your program. If the event has a high news rating, the visit of the state governor to your opening game, or your announcement of plans to build a new park, the event will pretty much take care of itself. Your outlets will be interested and will be asking you for details and your task will be somewhat limited to simply finding and supplying the information required and assisting with arrangements for interviews and such.

Registration and Distribution of Players

Registration

Registration of prospective players should be well-organized and conscientiously handled. Taking a bit of time to do the job properly may prevent a number of problems from occurring in mid-season. There are few more troublesome problems for league officials to face than the illegal player who pops up suddenly near the end of the season, or after the league's tournament team has been selected. A great percentage of such problems are the direct result of haphazard registration of players.

Most leagues today register their players online, most often times through their [DICK'S Team Sports HQ website and registration platform](#). Parents can do this in the comfort of their own home or elsewhere, or, leagues can hold registration at a school gym or similar facility. Parents can then sign up their children online there, or, leagues may still have parents sign up their children on paper. PONY encourages your league to please adapt to online registration, preferably with DICK'S Team Sports HQ/Blue Sombrero.

All written league registration data that is collected will eventually need to be entered into an electronic spreadsheet. Said spreadsheet will eventually need to be uploaded to [Affinity](#), when the league registers with PONY.

It is also best to have at least one trouble-shooter available. This man or woman should be a league official with considerable experience. The task here would be to check the validity of documents other than birth

certificates that are offered as proof of date of birth when birth certificates are not available and to decide cases of questionable residence. Please contact a local PONY Field Director with any questions.

At this registration session, at least one parent should appear with the player, particularly at the early age level, to sign the registration card and thus give his or her consent to participation by the player in league activity. This is also an opportune time to pass out literature to parents, or otherwise inform them of league activity.

The time of the first tryout session should also be announced at the registration.

If programs in different age levels, such as Bronco, Pony, and Colt, are operated by the same organization, families only have to submit personal data on behalf of their child one time for the player's entire career, if the league uses a [DICK'S Team Sports HQ/Blue Sombrero website and registration platform](#).

Above all, be sure that players are within the proper age limitations and live within your league boundaries. By doing this, you will eliminate many problems that could become quite serious later on. At the same time, if you see at registration a need to increase or otherwise change your boundaries, you still have time to do it before play begins. If a player can not properly substantiate a birth date at registration time, the player will still have time to find or obtain the proper documents before tryouts begin.

Plan your registration at least a week, preferably earlier, before the first tryouts so that you have time to check problem cases and to permit players to find birth documents, if they do not have them at registration time.

Some allowance will probably have to be made for late registration. No matter how thoroughly you publicize the registration time and place, some players will not get the word until their friends start reporting for tryouts. In some cases, it may not be the player's fault. Be especially careful, however, of late registrations. Do not be in a hurry. Have somebody on-hand at the first tryouts, or wherever the late registrations are to be handled.

A tryout list, or player agent's list, should be prepared during tryouts, which will list each participating player's name and evaluation information. This information will be used, often times, during team drafts. Managers should have the list before the player selection meeting is held.

Considerable latitude is given to sanctioned leagues in the matter of selecting players for the teams in the programs. Regulations require that the league adopt a specific player selection plan. The following pages contain descriptions of some plans currently in use that have been approved by headquarters. Other plans, or variations on these plans, may be used but are subject to adoption by your league.

Player Distribution Plan

Perhaps the most equitable system to assure equal distribution of talent among league teams, this plan limits assignments to teams to a single year. It has the advantage of motivating second year players to attempt to improve because they must again be candidates for teams in their second year.

1. During tryout sessions each player candidate is graded by the observing managers as to the ability to hit, run and field.
2. At least 12 days before the first scheduled game, the Player Agent shall preside at a meeting of team managers for the purpose of distributing players on teams of as near equal talent as possible.
 - a. A simple majority vote, unless otherwise indicated, shall decide any questions, with the Player Agent casting the deciding vote in case of tie.
3. The managers shall first consider pitching talent, distributing the available prospective pitchers to the teams being selected in such a way that there is a majority agreement that the pitching talent is as equally distributed as possible.
4. The managers shall then consider, in order, candidates for catching, first, second, and third base, shortstop and the outfield, distributing the talent by giving full consideration both to offensive and

defensive ability, until there is a majority agreement that the teams are constituted of as equal offensive and defensive ability as possible.

5. The managers shall then add as many substitute players to each team as are necessary to fill out the team rosters, giving consideration to offensive and defensive ability to keep team strength equal.
6. When distribution of players among the teams has been completed, the Player Agent shall assign team names, or otherwise identify each set of players. Slips of paper bearing the team names, or other identification, are placed in a container, and the managers shall then each draw to determine which of the teams they will manage for the current year.
 - a. If a manager wishes to retain a particular team name, team names may be assigned to each manager and after assigning numbers to each set of players, the managers draw to determine which set of players will comprise the team.

Player Draft

Widely used, the Player Draft system is perhaps the easiest to conduct and understand and is fairly adequate from the viewpoint of even distribution of talent among the teams in the league.

1. In the initial season, managers shall determine order of selection by drawing numbers from a hat. The manager drawing Number 1 shall have the first choice of players, Number 2 the second choice and so on. When all teams have made one selection, the manager holding No. 1 makes his second round selection. This is repeated until all team rosters are filled, or until the list of player candidates is exhausted.
2. In subsequent years order of selection shall be determined by the position of the teams in the league standings the previous year. The manager of the team in last place shall select first, the manager of the team which finished second to last select second, and so forth.
3. Each player thus drafted shall remain a member of that team for the balance of his eligibility in the league unless traded or released.
4. If desired, and provided a sufficient number of player candidates are available, each team may select additional player candidates after all team rosters have been filled.
 - a. When the number of player candidates selected is greater than that required to fill the roster of the team, managers shall reduce the number of players on the team roster to the proper limit at least one week before the first scheduled game.
 - b. Managers shall notify the Player Agent which players have been retained on the team roster and all others shall be returned to the player pool.
5. The child of a manager or coach, brother or sister of a player who is already a member of a team, shall be eligible for automatic draft.
 - a. Player candidates subject to automatic draft shall be the first candidates considered in the player draft.
 - b. A team manager may exercise the right to automatic draft of a player candidate by forfeiting the second round draft position.
 - c. In the event a manager does not desire to make an automatic draft choice, the player candidate concerned will be considered in the regular player pool.
 - d. All player candidates subject to automatic draft must participate in the tryout sessions the same as any other player candidate.

Second Season

If players and adults in your area have the interest, establishment of a Fall or Winter baseball season can be a valued asset to your league.

Basically the second season should focus on instruction and be less win oriented and structured than the regular season. If you live in a colder climate, there is still opportunity for play in the late summer and early fall.

After the completion of your regular playing season, assign the returning players to the leagues they will be playing with in the following regular season. A 12-year-old Bronco player, for example, is moved up to the Pony League. This gives players the opportunity to get a feel for the league they will be playing in, gives managers an opportunity to review player potential and help players improve technique and skills.

The schedule should be less demanding than regular season play. Limit practice to one time a week. Games may be played on one day, such as Saturday mornings, to avoid conflict with school activity. You may not want to even bother keeping league standings. Managers might be permitted to call time, interrupt play and correct errors in technique or strategy that are made during games.

This type of program can even serve as a training ground for aspiring umpires.

Special Ceremonies/Opening Day

Ceremonies

Special day ceremonies for your league should be well planned and well timed in advance. It is good to add an inspirational note to the program with an opening prayer and the playing of the National Anthem. Such events help to impart the feeling to the fans that PONY is a program with a purpose to help players develop into better adults not just another baseball or girls softball league. If it is possible to secure the services of a community band, this will add much to the color of your program, but recorded music played over a public address system will serve the purpose.

In planning Opening Day ceremonies, remember the fans are there to see young people play baseball, not to listen to adult speeches. Though it is nice to recognize dignitaries and those who have contributed greatly to the program, these things are easily overdone.

Sample Schedule

Be courteous to your fans. Start your game near the exact time you have publicly stated it will start. To schedule ceremonies, determine the amount of time each will take, then start with the actual game starting time and work backwards. A sample special day ceremony schedule follows. It may be that teams will not be given batting practice at the game site, or you may wish to enlarge, cut down or eliminate certain segments. This schedule allows 40 minutes for batting practice for each team, ten minutes for infield warm-up for each team and five minutes for the ground crew to line the field and give it a final dragging while the umpires and managers hold their meetings near home plate.

At the conclusion of the umpires' and managers' meeting, when the ground crew has cleared the field, have both teams with their managers line up, one on the third base line and one on the first base line or across the diamond from first base to the pitcher's plate, and from third base to the pitcher's plate as the umpires stand immediately in front of home plate.

In order to have the players more directly facing the stands, you may want one team to line up between third and second bases, and the other between first and second bases.

If a national flag is raised during the playing of the National Anthem, all players, managers and umpires on the field should face the flag. If no flag is used, or is out of sight, all should face the direction from which the music is coming.

The public address announcer should give the name and position of each player each time the player comes to bat throughout the game; the runs, hits and errors for each half inning of play, and such announcements as are of sufficient importance. If no scoreboard is present, the score can be given at the end of each half inning. The public address announcer, however, is not a radio commentator, and personal observations of the game have no place on the public address system.

Sample Special Day Ceremonies

Schedule:

12:10-Home team takes batting practice.

12:50-Visiting team takes batting practice.

1:30-Home team takes infield warm-up.

1:40-Visiting team takes infield warm-up.

1:50-Ground crew lines field after final dragging.
Umpires and managers meet in back of home plate.
Opening lineups announced by public address system.
Both teams on baselines. Opening prayer.
National Anthem.

2:00-Game begins.

Optional Method

If it is desirable to introduce each player individually to the crowd, this may be done immediately after the ground crew leaves the field. As the player's name and position are announced over the public address system, the player runs from the dugout to the baseline on which the team will stand for the prayer and National Anthem.

The players should be instructed to hold their caps over their hearts and stand at attention during the National Anthem and prayer. A fidgeting, half-slumped over group of players is not a very impressive sight.

The Jamboree

One way to kick-off the league season is with a Jamboree, which provides an opportunity for all of the teams in the league to play an abbreviated game on the same day.

The Jamboree is an excellent opportunity to get all of the parents and league workers at the park on the same day, provides a good time to get team photos of all of your teams and can be a profitable fundraising event for the league through concession sales and special events.

For example, let each game be limited to 50 minutes of actual playing time, allowing ten minutes for infield warm-ups and field preparation between games. With eight teams, you can schedule the first game at 10 a.m. and follow with games at 11 a.m., noon and 1 p.m.

You can, as some leagues do, set up a point system to determine a winner, or have a play-off between the two teams with the most points. One suggestion for a point system:

Base hits - 1 point Runs - 2 points Home Runs - 4 points Stolen Bases - 1 point Double Plays - 2 points
Pick-off base - 2 points Most hits per inning - 3 points

It is advisable that each team be required to play every player.

Having families at the park for an extended period should result in a high volume of concession sales. You might also want to set up a bake sale, or picnic or dinner following the day's activities.

Such a day requires a lot of preparation and hard work, but it can get your season off to a good start.

Rules for Displaying the Flag of the United States

In general, when more than one foreign flag is displayed, the U.S. Flag is placed to its right, the viewer's left, and other flags are displayed alphabetically by nation. The U.S. Flag should be raised first followed by those of other nations in alphabetical order.

As illustrated:

1. When flown from a staff, on a speaker's platform, the U.S. Flag should be placed on the speaker's right.
2. If placed elsewhere than on the platform, it should be on the right of the audience as they face the platform.
3. When displayed against a wall with another flag, the U.S. Flag will be on its right, the viewer's left, with its staff crossing over the staff of the other flag.
4. When flags of two or more nations are displayed, they should be the same size and flown from separate staffs. Custom forbids the flag of one nation to fly over another in peacetime.
5. When carried in a procession with other flags, the U.S. Flag should be on the marching right. If there is a line of other flags it should be front center of that line. The U.S. Flag should always be staffed when carried on a float.
6. If the flag is displayed from a staff projecting from a building the union should be at the peak. When flown from a halyard over a sidewalk from a building pole, the flag should be raised union first from the building.
7. The U.S. Flag should be placed in the center, and higher, when displayed with a group of state, local or organizational flags flown from staffs.
8. When state, local or organizational flags are flown from the same halyard, the U.S. Flag should always be at the peak. When flown from separate staffs, the U.S. Flag should always be hoisted first and lowered last. The U.S. Flag should always be higher than adjacent state, local or organizational flags. No flag or pennant will be flown above or to the right of the U.S. Flag at the same level.
9. Unless flown from a staff, the flag should be displayed flat or in such a manner that its folds fall free. When suspended over a street, the union should point either North or East.

These rules are based on Public Law 829; 77th Congress.

Marks of Respect

As marks of respect, the law also states, The U.S. Flag may be flown at night on special patriotic occasions. The flag should be raised briskly and lowered ceremoniously.

The flag should never be allowed to touch anything beneath it nor should it ever be carried flat or horizontally but always aloft and free. The flag should never be used as drapery or decoration, for carrying or holding anything, or stored in such a manner that it will be damaged or soiled.

The flag should never be used for advertising purposes in any manner whatsoever, nor should any picture, drawing or other decoration be placed upon or attached to the flag, its staff or halyard.

When the flag is so worn that it is no longer suitable for display, it should be destroyed in a dignified manner, preferably by burning.

An opinion from the institute of Heraldry states that, when raised displayed or placed in marching order with the U.S. Flag and other National Flags, the flag of Puerto Rico should be considered as a state flag.

The National Anthem

There is no federal law concerning the playing of the national anthem of the United States with a foreign national anthem. It is customary in the United States, however, to play the foreign anthem first followed by the American National Anthem. The same procedure would be followed with regard to singing the national anthems.

Suggested Constitution and Bylaws

Your league constitution should contain a clause that your corporation will carry on a program of baseball and/or girls softball in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of PONY Baseball, Inc., a nonprofit corporation organized under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The constitution should also contain a clause that in the event it fails to abide by the Rules and Regulations of PONY Baseball Inc., it shall, at the request of PONY Baseball Inc., cease to use the name of PONY Baseball Inc. and the registered trade mark names and emblems of PONY Baseball leagues.

Constitutions and Bylaws, amendments and revisions should be submitted to PONY Headquarters for review. Leagues will be advised of any element that appears to be in conflict with the Rules and Regulations of PONY Baseball and PONY Girls Softball.

Once completed, a copy of the Constitution and Bylaws of the league should be sent to PONY Headquarters. Here the documents can be placed on file and will be available to the league in the future. Often, due to personnel changes, the new officers cannot locate a copy of the league Constitution and Bylaws, and if the documents have been submitted to PONY Baseball/Softball, copies of them may be obtained upon request.

Basically, it can be said that the Constitution is the fundamental or principle law of your corporation. Bylaws are an agreement of the members of the corporation for the regulation of internal affairs or for dealings of the corporation with other parties.

This constitution is provided as a guide for the writing of your league constitution. Variance in state laws will require some deviation, as will other conditions peculiar to a specific community or organization.

The league Bylaws should encompass the specifics, form a set or regulations as to how the league will select and approve managers, coaches and other personnel; the system of player distribution among the teams of the league; specific policy regarding receipt and disbursement of league funds and purchasing policies; the handling of game protest; responsibility for field maintenance and the handling of uniforms and equipment and tournament team selection. Tournament awards are available through your Field Directors for all age levels and all levels of tournament play. Call PONY for more information.

Constitution

Article I-Name

The league (organization or corporation) shall be known as: (Insert your league, organization or corporation name) hereinafter referred to as the "League" (or "Organization" or "Corporation") a member of PONY Baseball, Inc. a non-profit Pennsylvania corporation.

Article II-Statement of Policy

Section 1-It shall be the policy of the League so to conduct its activities that the physical and moral welfare of the young people for whose benefit it is organized shall remain paramount and all matters of policy shall be determined on that basis.

Section 2-No person who is a member of or who is employed by or who is in any way connected with the League shall receive any personal financial benefit therefore beyond the reasonable value of the services in carrying out the purpose for which the League has been organized.

Section 3-In order to secure suitable and adequate financial backing to carry out the purpose of the League, it shall be the policy of the League to permit only such sponsorship as is consistent with the purpose for which the League is organized and to select sponsors who are interested in the League solely or principally as a means of contributing to the welfare of young people.

Section 4-It shall be the policy of the League to prohibit any direct advertising of alcoholic beverages or tobacco products in connection with the League or any of its programs.

Article III-Purpose

Section 1-The purpose of the League shall be to organize and supervise the playing of baseball and softball under specialized rules and regulations, to secure suitable and adequate financial backing for these purposes, and to own, lease or otherwise provide suitable playing facilities and equipment for these purposes.

Article IV-Membership

Section 1- volunteers adult leaders, parents or guardians of players, team sponsors and other contributors, managers, coaches and other interested adults shall be eligible for membership. The League may wish to more specifically define those who are eligible for membership in the League organization, and thus have the right to vote at annual meetings. Membership may include parents of any child registered in the League, managers and coaches of teams in the League, all elected officers and members of the Board of Directors, Committee people, and others.

Article V-Board of Directors

Section 1-The Board of Directors shall be those persons elected by the members of the League at the annual meeting for the terms and/or in the manner provided for in the Bylaws of the League.

Section 2-In recognition of the general powers of the Board of Directors exercised by virtue of their office, they shall have the power: to purchase or otherwise acquire for the League any property, right or privilege which the League is authorized to acquire by the League membership, at such price or consideration and upon such terms as the Board of Directors may deem expedient and as is approved by vote of the league membership; to appoint or remove or suspend subordinate agents or volunteers and to determine their duties and fix their salaries; to determine who shall be authorized, on behalf of the League, to sign bills, notices, receipts, acceptances, endorsements, checks, releases, contracts, and any other instruments; to delegate any of the powers of the Board of Directors to any standing committee, special committee or any officer or agent of the League, with any powers as the Board of Directors may see fit to grant and to generally do all such lawful acts and take actions as may be necessary and proper.

Article VI-Officers

Section 1-The officers of the League shall consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Player Agent.

Article VII-Government

Section 1-The government of the League shall be under the direct supervision of the officers and the Board of Directors.

Section 2-All rules governing the playing of baseball and softball, the legality of players and related questions shall be in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of PONY Baseball, Inc., with such modifications adopted by the Board of Directors of the League and approved by PONY Baseball, Inc.

Article VIII-Bylaws

Section 1-Any Bylaws, not consistent with this Constitution, embodying additional provisions for the government of the Corporation, shall be adopted and may be amended by the membership of the League.

Article IX-Amendments

Section 1-This Constitution may be amended only by a majority vote of the League membership at an annual meeting of the League membership, or a special meeting of the League membership called for that purpose.

Bylaws

Article I -Meetings and Voting

Section 1 -The membership of the League shall hold an annual meeting at such place and time as shall be determined by the Board of Directors.

(It may be preferable to select a specific date for the annual meeting, such as the third Thursday in August, or to specify that the annual meeting be held prior to a specific date, such as not later than the third Thursday in August.)

Notice of time and place of such annual meeting shall be made known to the membership of the League through publication and/or individual mailings (in whatever form contact is generally made with the membership) not less than 10 days prior to the date of the meeting.

Section 2-Special meetings of the League membership may be called by the President, or by majority vote of the Board of Directors, or upon written request to the Secretary by not less than 15 members of the League. Notice of time and place of special meetings of the League membership shall be made known to the membership of the League not less than five days prior to the date of the meeting.

Section 3-At each annual or special meeting of the League every eligible member present shall be entitled to vote. There shall be no proxy voting. A majority of those present and eligible to vote shall be required for election and questions brought to a vote.

Section 4 -The presence of not less than 10 members eligible to vote shall be required to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any special or annual meeting of the League.

Article II -Election of Officers

Section 1 -At the meeting prior to the annual meeting, a Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the President, consisting of two members of the Board of Directors and two members of the general membership, to obtain and nominate officers for the following year.

Section 2 -The term of office for all officers shall be one year beginning the day following the annual meeting.

Section 3 -All officers shall be eligible for reelection. (Leagues desiring to limit the term of office might state "No person shall serve in the same office for more than three consecutive terms").

Section 4-In the event of the death, resignation, or inability to perform the duties of office for any reason, of any officer, the Board of Directors, by majority vote of the entire board, shall be empowered to select a replacement for such officer who shall serve until the following annual meeting.

Article III -Board of Directors

Section 1 -The Board of Directors shall include the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Player Agent, Chairman of all Standing Committees, and the President of the Auxiliary.

Section 2 -The Board of Directors shall meet on a monthly basis at such time and place determined by the President. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the President, or by the Secretary, upon receipt of the written request of at least three members of the Board of Directors.

Section 3-The Board of Directors shall have the authority to suspend, discharge or otherwise discipline any member, manager, coach, player, league official, umpire or other person whose conduct is considered detrimental to the best interests of the League.

Section 4 -Any adult (persons 18 years of age or older) who is suspended, removed or otherwise disciplined by the Board of Directors shall have the right to appeal such action before a majority of the members of the Board of Directors at a regular or special meeting called for that purpose.

Section 5-The President shall, upon evidence of misconduct of any player, notify the manager of the team of which the player is a member and the parents of any such player who is less than 18 years of age, within 24 hours of the act. The manager shall appear with the player before the League Player Agent, and at least three other members of the Board of Directors, for consideration of appropriate action. The player's parents or guardian shall be advised of and invited to attend such meeting.

Article IV -Financial Policy

Section 1 -The Board of Directors shall decide all matters pertaining to the finances of the league, bearing the responsibility to conduct the financial affairs of the league in a sound business-like manner.

Section 2-To equalize the benefits of the League for all participating teams, solicitation of funds shall be for the treasury of the League and contributions to individuals or teams shall be discouraged.

Section 3-The Board of Directors shall institute policy relative to the preparation and acceptance of an annual budget, and periodic and annual presentation of financial reports, and an annual audit of the books of the League.

Article V - Auxiliary

Section 1 -An Auxiliary organization may be formed for the purpose of assisting the Board of Directors in fund-raising activity, concession stand operation, and other activities as suggested by the Board of Directors.

Section 2-All activities of the Auxiliary are subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.

Section 3-The President of the Auxiliary shall become a member of the Board of Directors of the League upon election and for the term of office.

Article VI -Duties of Officers

Section 1 -The President shall preside at all meetings of the League membership and at all meetings of the Board of Directors; shall serve as the Chief Executive Officer of the League; shall be an ex-officio member of all standing and special committees and shall perform such other duties as are normally associated with the office of President.

Section 2-The Vice President shall perform such duties as may be assigned by the President; shall otherwise assist the President in the performance of the President's duties and shall preside at meetings in the absence of the President.

Section 3-The Secretary shall have custody of the Constitution and Bylaws, and all other records of the League; shall keep an accurate record of the meetings and other activities of the League and of the Board of Directors; shall be responsible for all correspondence on behalf of the League and shall transmit all records and correspondence to any person elected to succeed him or her in that office.

Section 4-The Treasurer shall receive and disburse all funds with the approval of the Board of Directors; shall keep an accurate account of all funds received and disbursed for the League; shall submit a financial report at all regular meetings and at such other times as may be requested by the President; shall compile an annual report of League finances; shall provide the books of the League and such other documentation as requested for the annual audit and shall transmit all financial records to any person elected to succeed him or her in that office.

Section 5-The Player Agent shall supervise the annual registration of player candidates, tryout sessions and distribution of players among League teams and shall maintain any listing of eligible players not assigned to teams who may be available as replacement players.

Article VII - Standing Committees

(Permanent or standing committees should be included according to league needs or desires. These may include, as examples):

Section 1 -The Manager-Coach Selection Committee shall interview and review the credentials and qualifications of all persons who apply for such positions in the League and shall actively seek out a sufficient number of applicants to meet the needs of the League. Final selection of candidates proposed by the committee shall be subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.

Section 2-The Finance Committee shall, in cooperation with the Treasurer, prepare an annual budget for the League; shall be charged with preparing an annual audit of League financial activities; shall supervise fundraising activity and securing of sponsors on behalf of the league and, at the request of the Treasurer, shall assist with the collection and handling of League monies.

Section 3 -The Field and Facilities Committee shall be charged with the general preparation, maintenance, development and improvement of all playing facilities owned, leased or used by the League and shall make recommendations to the Finance Committee for suggested or needed expenditures in this area of operation.

Section 4-The Equipment Committee shall be charged with the responsibility of ordering and purchasing uniforms and playing equipment for the League, the distribution of equipment among the League teams, the collection, inventory and storage of equipment during the off-season and preparation of such reports and suggestions as needed by the Finance Committee for budgetary action.

Section 5-The Umpire Committee shall be charged with obtaining suitable umpires for the league as directed by the Board of Directors, shall consider all complaints relative to umpires and make suitable recommendations to the Board of Directors. The Umpire Committee shall make every effort to register all umpires with PONY.

Section 6 -The Publicity Committee shall be responsible for news media relations and the general publicizing of league activities and special events.

(The league may wish to add or delete Standing Committees from this list and to expand or decrease committee duties and responsibilities, depending upon local needs).

Article VIII -Special Committees

Section 1 -Special Committees may be appointed by the President for such special purposes as deemed necessary. Committee duties and responsibilities are to be outlined at the time of the appointment and such committees shall be dissolved at the annual meeting following appointment, but may be re-appointed at any time following the annual meeting.

(A word of caution as to the appointment of Special Committees. Most activities can be handled by a Standing Committee and should be referred to that Chairman. Irresponsible appointment of Special Committees can disrupt or interfere with the work of your Standing Committees. If the purpose is a major activity for example the construction of a new playing facility it may be better to refer the matter to your Fields and Facilities Committee and let that Chairman participate in the selection of a special sub-committee of the Fields and Facilities Committee to handle the activity).

Article IX -Roberts Rules

Section 1 -The rules contained in the most current edition of "Roberts Rules of Order" Newly Revised shall govern League meetings and meetings of the Board of Directors and League Committees in all cases in which they are applicable and not inconsistent with these Bylaws and any special rules of order the League shall adopt.

(While Roberts Rules are a recognized format for settling procedural matters, they can require interpretation by a knowledgeable person, and, in general, are written for a more formal type of meeting than that usually associated with this type of organization. It is suggested that meetings not be bogged down with constant references to Roberts Rules where no serious challenge to procedure is made).

Article X -Amendments

Section 1 -These Bylaws may be amended by majority vote of the League membership at the annual meeting or a special meeting called for that purpose provided notification for special meetings for this purpose provided to the membership at least 10 days in advance of the date of such meeting.

(The League may wish to include provisions in the Bylaws for the selection of tournament teams and tournament managing and coaching personnel, for a system of league player distribution and for a Decisions Committee or these items may be covered in a separate document, such as Local League Rules and Regulations).

The Code of the Game

Players live clean and play hard. Players play for the love of the game, winning without boasting, losing without excuse, but never quitting. Players respect officials and accept their decisions and never forget that when people judge a player's actions they judge not only the player, but the team, the league, the community the player represents.

Managers and coaches inspire in the players a love for the game and a desire to win, teaching that it is better to lose fairly than to win unfairly. Managers and coaches teach players and spectators to respect officials by setting a good example. Managers and coaches are the type of people they want the players to be.

Officials know the rules, are fair and firm in all decisions and call them as they see them. Officials treat players and managers and coaches courteously and demand the same treatment for themselves. Officials know the game is for the players and let the players have the spotlight.

Spectators never boo officials or players or managers or coaches. Spectators appreciate a good play, no matter who makes it. Spectators know that their community gets the blame, or the praise, for their conduct, and recognize the need for more sportsmen and fewer sports.

Paraphrased from "The Christian Athlete".

Athletics are supposed to build character but, remember that "character" is not just being good. It is trying to be better.

Headquarters Staff

Executive Staff

Abraham L. Key III-President and Chief Executive Officer

A one-time player in the Washington, Pennsylvania Pony and Colt Leagues, Abraham Key assumed the Presidency of PONY Baseball and Softball in January, 1995. He joined the staff on a full-time basis after graduating from West Virginia University's School of Journalism and School of Business in 1981. He had worked five years as a part-time employee while in high school and college. Key is married to Susan Mondik Key, an attorney with the Washington firm of Peacock, Keller and Ecker, and they have a daughter Casey, and a son, Lincoln.

As president, Key is responsible for the daily operation of PONY Baseball and Softball, including, but not limited to, managing the staff and the international headquarters facility, development and management of agreements with manufacturers and sponsors, directed services to leagues and the Field Director organization and the development of international membership.

In addition to his responsibilities at PONY, Key has served on the USA Baseball Board of Directors since 1995 and currently serves on their Executive Committee as Vice President - Treasurer (2000-2008). He also served on the American Baseball Coaches Association Executive Committee (1999-2004) and the America Baseball Coaches Association Board of Directors (2002-2004). He was a board member and treasurer of the National Council of Youth Sports (1992-2002), an organization of full-time professional staff workers in amateur, non-profit organizations concerned with development, enhancement and support of youth sports activities.

Locally, Key served on the Washington County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors (1999-2005), as Secretary (2001-2005). The former President of the Brownson House Alumni Association, which supports a youth sports service organization in Washington, Key is a member of the Presbyterian Church, the Washington Lions Club, and Washington Elks Lodge 776. He locally coaches youth softball and youth basketball.

Karen Reese-Director of Softball Operations

Returning to her native Washington, PA after five years in Southern California where she was employed as an elementary school teacher, Karen joined the PONY staff in April, 1988, with primary responsibility in the shipping department. She was named to her present position in November, 1990. Karen focuses on service to PONY Girls Softball Field Directors and is the primary interpreter of softball rules for all PONY Girls Softball programs. She continues to have responsibility for supervision of shipping, as well as the handling of charge card transactions and related duties.

The daughter of former PONY President, Roy Gillespie, Karen is a graduate of California University of Pennsylvania, in California, PA. She a member of Immaculate Conception Church and is active in Washington Rotary Club, Traveler's Protective Association, Joint Service Club, Your Child's Place (Pathways of Southwestern PA, and Washington County United Way.

Brent Liberatore-Director of Information Technology

Before his hiring, Brent was no stranger to PONY Baseball and Softball. In the past, he had acted as a photographer for PONY events, including the PONY World Series, donating his time and photos to PONY. He is also the chairman of the PONY Technology Committee, previously serving as an "outside" observer, before his employment with PONY.

Liberatore is an alumnus of California University of Pennsylvania, graduating with a bachelor's degree in Computer Science and Mathematics. For the previous 10 years, he had worked for the F. L. Haus Company of Pittsburgh, PA, serving as their IT Director, doing similar duties for them that he will be taking on for PONY. He now uses his skills learned at the printing company to oversee PONY's printing projects.

Currently, Liberatore lives in Washington, PA with his wife Allison. In the past, he has been the vice-president of a local youth girls' basketball program, as well as coaching several of that league's teams. Liberatore also has coached softball for a local girls' softball program, coaching teams that his daughter has played for. Liberatore has one daughter, Jocelyn, an alumnus of Bethany College in Bethany, WV.

He is working diligently on his latest large project - overseeing the redesign of the PONY Registration and Rostering System.

Office Staff

Carson Fox-Multimedia Manager

Fox began with PONY in the spring of 2014 as an intern, assisting PONY and Washington, Pennsylvania's Tournaments, Inc. with the planning and preparation of the 2014 Pony League World Series, and he saw his role grow over the next two and a half years, along with the growth of the event.

Fox was hired by PONY Baseball, Inc. in September of 2016 to become its first, full-time Multimedia Manager. In his role as Multimedia Manager, Fox will be constantly updating PONY.org and PONY's social media accounts with fresh, PONY-related multimedia content. Additionally, Fox will oversee sponsor relationships with PONY's partners so that PONY leagues, coaches and players are aware of the resources that PONY offers them. Also, Fox will handle special projects, marketing and social media campaigns to help grow PONY throughout the world.

He is always looking for news contributions from PONY's Zones and leagues throughout the world, so please contact him if you have a story. Also, if you know of a PONY baseball or softball player who has moved on to play for a USA Baseball or other National Team, the college ranks or professional level, Fox would like to hear about it to include that player in PONY's database. He also encourages you to Like PONY Baseball and Softball on Facebook, follow @PONYbbsb on Twitter, follow ponybaseballandsoftball on Instagram.

A PONY graduate of Canon-Mac Youth Baseball in his hometown of Canonsburg, Pennsylvania, Fox is a 2012 graduate of Canon-McMillan High School, where he was a Distinguished Honors student, baseball player and sports broadcaster for CM's football, basketball and hockey teams. He then moved on to Waynesburg University's Department of Communication, where he said he learned the skills, life lessons and motivation to become a successful sports media professional, as he was a member of the Yellow Jacket newspaper staff, WCYJ-FM radio, WCTV, the Waynesburg University Sports Network and Waynesburg University Sports Information team. Fox graduated from Waynesburg Summa Cum Laude in May of 2016 before re-joining PONY for that summer.

Fox is a member of the First United Methodist Church of Bridgeville and sits as a media savvy member of its Outreach Committee. In his free time, Fox enjoys producing and hosting his own national sports talk podcast, working out, playing with his two dogs and spending time with his

fiancee Natalie. Fox is an avid West Virginia Mountaineers and Pittsburgh Pirates fan, and he loves to travel to Arizona with his family where his brother is a current student at Arizona State University.

Kim Lemons

Kim joined the PONY staff in 2003. She is the office secretary.

Kim is active in her Church, Trinity High School Choir Boosters, Girls Scouts of America and Traveler's Protective Association.

She and her husband Bob are the parents of two daughters, Michelle and Jessica.

They Make It Possible

Many thousands of men and women give countless years of volunteer's effort to make PONY Baseball and Softball possible.

The mother who takes time from a busy schedule to mend a uniform, the father who finds time after work to supervise practice sessions or help build a field, the merchants and civic groups who give more than their share in order to provide good equipment, those without children of their own who give freely of their time and money, those who labor into the late hours over financial and administrative problems of the league, those who with aching limbs maintain the fields, operate the concession stands and repair equipment, those who can only sit in the stands and cheer all are a vital part of PONY Baseball/Softball.

Without these thousands, most of whom serve without recognition, PONY could not exist to help develop better young people today and better citizens tomorrow.

The New League

PONY Baseball and Softball leagues generally get their start in a community as a result of the efforts of a small group of men and women who recognize the need for such a program.

Probably the most important advantage of affiliation with a national organization is information. PONY Baseball/Softball gathers from its member leagues information, which is screened, sifted and developed into a pattern of league operation. In dealing with administrative problems, player registration and selection, the building and maintenance of playing facilities and other items, your league has the advantage of years of experience by volunteers throughout the country which has been accumulated by PONY headquarters.

Affiliation provides more immediate recognition, and greater cooperation from the municipalities, industries and organizations which will support your league. It is easier to incorporate your league as a non-profit corporation in order to solicit tax-deductible contributions, and league insurance is generally easier to obtain.

Greater stability is afforded the league when rules development and interpretation is provided by an outside party rather than by a member of the local organization who may sometimes have a problem being objective due to close association with the league.

Several hundred men and women experienced in youth baseball organization serve as Field Directors in PONY and assist the office staff in servicing your league.

National tournament competition is an added incentive for the players in your league and is an aid in advertising your league within the community. Such publicity becomes an asset when fund drives are conducted or other support is sought within the community.

The membership fee paid for each team in your league should be a small item in the total operational cost of your league. It is one that is far offset by the increased effectiveness your league will have in your community as a result of affiliation with PONY.

First Steps

You will want to discuss your plans for organization of a league and affiliation with PONY Baseball/Softball with others who share your feeling for need of such a program. You will need their assistance in setting up plans for your first meeting and in publicizing that meeting. If you have not yet contacted PONY Baseball/Softball, call or email: PONY Baseball/ Softball: (724) 225-1060 info@pony.org, to advise the Headquarters of your intentions. Literature concerning the program will be made available to you, and our Field Directors will be advised of your interest.

You may want to have several meetings with the organizing group before you have your first public meeting. You may want to contact your Park and Recreation Department, or similar groups, to insure their cooperation before making public announcement of your intentions.

The First Meetings

With the help of your organizing committee, select and arrange a site for your first public meeting. Make up a list of community organizations who might send representatives to the meeting and business people who may be interested in lending financial support to your league. The purpose of the first meeting is to let people know what you intend to do, and why. Use every available public communication facility at your disposal to let the people of your community know of your plans.

Be sure that whoever conducts your meeting has a basic understanding of PONY Baseball and Softball, its purpose and its place in your community. Often it may be possible to secure a speaker from a nearby league or a PONY Field Director to aid in explaining the basics of league operation at this most important first meeting.

Many of the thousands of volunteers adult leaders who conduct leagues in their communities, or serve as PONY Baseball Field Directors are willing to travel short distances to help another community with its early organization.

Setting up the Organization

At the first meeting, or at a second meeting, after public interest has been determined, it is time to select officers and appoint committees.

You will need a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Player Agent. Their duties are outlined under the League Administration section of this book and are basically those of the officers of any organization.

You may want to set up an Administrative or Executive Committee, perhaps composed of the officers and committee chairmen, so that you will have a smaller group to work with and make decisions in between meetings of the general body.

Following the election of officers, the new officers should select volunteers or appoint chairmen of committees. Among those needed are:

- Managers and Coaches
- Publicity
- Finance
- Fields and Facilities
- Equipment
- Umpires
- Constitution and By-Laws

Committee Duties

These will vary from community to community. In one instance, playing facilities may already be available but their acquisition may be a major consideration in another area. The size of any committee may very well depend upon the anticipated effort needed to accomplish its task in your community. Thus, one committee will vary in size from another as dictated by the size of the job to be done, and the prevailing conditions in your community. One person may be able to secure playing facilities in one community, but it may take a group working together to secure playing facilities in another community. Leagues must [register with PONY](#) to gain membership. Registration must be filed by the league each year prior their first league game. When the registrations are received at Headquarters, they are processed, and receipt of the registration is acknowledged by email. Copies of the application are then passed on to the Division Director

who, after checking the forms for possible boundary conflicts and similar problems, will issue the membership certificate to the league.

Under no condition will a membership certificate be issued to a league until registration has been completed and processed at Headquarters and approved by the Field Directors.

How Many Teams?

PONY Baseball/Softball encourages leagues to field as many teams as are necessary and to provide playing opportunity for as many players as possible. Your desires may be affected by the availability of playing facilities, financial considerations and the number of players who register for participation in your league. Where players are given an actual opportunity to play on a fairly regular basis, they usually turn out in sufficient numbers. When playing time is generally limited to the nine starting players, you may find young people reluctant to attend numerous practice sessions and give up other activity to accept a role as substitute. This is one of the primary reasons PONY uses two-year age brackets for its leagues.

Boundaries

Leagues establish their own boundaries, but the boundaries must be approved by the Field Directors. Often times, a league's boundaries are modeled exactly as the local school district. Leagues will be expected to give every player residing within the boundaries they submit an opportunity to try out for a position on a team in the league.

Shetland, Pinto, Mustang, Bronco, Pony, Colt and Palomino boundaries need not be identical. Baseball league boundaries need not be identical to Softball league boundaries. New leagues and renewal leagues desiring to change their boundaries must submit a clearly marked map of their desired boundaries along with their membership application forms. Such maps are passed along to the Field Directors for their consideration and approval.

The Division Director, based upon the recommendations of the Field Directors, reserves the right to adjust boundaries in the event of the overlapping of territorial requests or because of inequitable conditions. It is the policy of PONY Baseball/Softball to permit leagues to retain their boundaries as requested unless it appears the league is not, or cannot serve the players living within the boundaries as well as they might be served if a second league were established in the vicinity.

League officials will be consulted before any change in the boundaries is made.

Equipment Costs

Equipment costs vary greatly based upon the amount and quality of gear purchased. Often times, in today's world, individual players purchase their own bats, gloves, helmets and other gear. Sometimes though, it could greatly benefit teams if the league itself could provide some equipment, such as catcher's gear, pitching machines or L-screens. These decisions are often made by the league's board members on a yearly basis.

Minor Leagues

The PONY Board of Directors does not condone the concept of minor leagues (under any name), though it is recognized that this is a difficult area of interpretation and that minor leagues do exist in various forms within the organization.

PONY believes that minor league concepts tend to make some players feel like second-class citizens. The school of thought support the minor league concept is that players of average ability sit on the bench as

substitutes in the major league, while players of less than average ability are playing more as starters in a minor league. This concept deprives some coaches of the opportunity to instruct players of less than average ability alongside the other players on the team.

Players of less than average ability need more time and individual instruction. If all such players are sent off to the minors, the managers and coaches in those leagues face the task of working with 12 to 15 players who all need individual attention. If such players are divided among all of the teams in the league, better players can be used to conduct drills with the team while the manager and coaches give some individual attention to those players who need the most help. Better players can work with players who need individual attention; thus, sharing their ability and perhaps learning a bit about helping out a friend.

More and more leagues are adopting rules which require that each player play in a certain number of innings each game, or so many innings a week. The successful team is generally one managed by a person who has spent time with all of the players assigned to the team and not just the nine who comprise the starting lineup.

The minor league concept is avoided by some leagues that simply do not bother to sign up players with less than average ability.

At some point, decisions must be made:

1. Is your goal to really try to provide baseball and girls softball for as many young people as possible, or simply enough to qualify your community to enter a team in tournament play?
2. Are you more concerned about winning a tournament, or helping the young people of your community through organized baseball or girls softball competition?

Umpires

Umpires for your league may be volunteers or semi-professional umpires who belong to an association of umpires, or umpires who are trained by your league and perhaps compensated to some degree.

The success of your league will largely depend upon the quality of umpiring you can obtain. Successful umpires, paid or volunteers, must know the rules of baseball or softball, the rules of PONY and the techniques of umpiring.

If the league cannot afford to use association umpires, or if none are available, you may have to set up your own training program for volunteers, who may or may not be paid for the games they work. Someone with umpiring experience, or a college or high school baseball coach, may be willing to assist you in organizing a training program for umpires. Older players can be trained to work games for teams in the younger age groups, or young adults who have completed their playing days but retain an interest in the game are good prospects.

It is least advisable to ignore the importance of umpiring to the success of your league and rely on parents or others to work your games. Incompetent umpiring can lead to numerous disputes.

Successful use of a corps of volunteers umpires in your league will depend upon the willingness of the managers and coaches and parents and league officials to recognize that such umpires will make mistakes and may not be familiar with the fine points of the rules.

Some such amateur umpires become highly skilled. Others are driven from the scene by harsh criticism long before they have the opportunity to adequately develop their skills.

PONY Baseball/Softball maintains an [Umpire Registration program](#) for umpires to provide input to the program, based on their experience and knowledge, to exchange information among themselves and to work for the general improvement in umpiring within the PONY organization. For a nominal fee, umpires receive copies of all PONY rule books, a copy of The Official Rules of Major League Baseball, PONY

Umpire emblem, and are issued an identification card. Names of Registered Umpires within your area will be supplied upon request from headquarters.

This is PONY Baseball and Softball

We Believe

PONY Baseball, Inc., is a non-profit corporation that is the administrative body for baseball and girls softball leagues in the following age brackets:

Baseball & Softball

Foal League - 4U

Shetland League - 6U

Pinto League - 8U

Mustang League - 10U

Bronco League - 12U

Pony League - 14U

Colt League - 16U

Palomino League - 18U

Thoroughbred League - 23U

These leagues are designed as a method of community action to help young people develop into better adults through participation in organized, supervised recreation.

Sportsmanship, teamwork, self-reliance and self-discipline are among the attributes needed by citizens of the future. These positive characteristics can be learned through participation in organized league play.

In essence, PONY believes that if you teach young people to play by the rules, they will learn to live by the rules.

Pony Girls Softball

While girls may play in the baseball leagues, many prefer to play girls softball. PONY Girls Softball has been developed to meet this need. Shetland League is for girls six-and-under. Pinto League is for girls eight-and-under; Mustang for those ten-and-under; Bronco for girls 12-and-under; Pony for girls 14-and-under; the Colt League for girls 16-and-under and Palomino League for those 18-and-under.

Why Pony Baseball-Softball?

PONY Baseball/Softball is not designed for a few highly skilled athletes, but for as many players in the community as possible who are sincerely interested in the game. In the leagues for younger age players, it is generally desirable to make every attempt to include every player who registers. Doing so will give them an opportunity to determine their fondness for the game, and also give them the chance to learn the basic skills the game requires. At the same time, particularly as the players advance in age, the privilege of participation should be earned through attainment of performance levels by conscientious attendance at games and practice sessions and by general conduct and development on the playing field.

It is not logical to assume that every young person loves to play baseball or softball or that all will continue an interest in the game as they grow and develop into young adults. Some will develop interests in other areas, to the exclusion of baseball and softball, and others will never develop more than a casual interest in the game.

Any game can be an effective tool to teach, but only when the player has a desire to play the game.

Those who do not develop as players, but maintain an interest in the game, may be directed into such activities as scorekeeping, field maintenance, equipment and uniform handling, announcing, statistics and umpiring.

Two Year Age Span

Experimentation has indicated a two-year age bracket is the most practical for growing players. Often, because of their lack of maturity, ability and size, the younger players in a league that involves more than two years, do not communicate with the older players, and generally find themselves spending an entire season on the bench. With players of only two ages involved, it is far easier to permit every player to actually play because the difference in skills between the age groups is not that great.

Scaled Down Diamonds

The game of baseball and softball cannot be played as it was intended to be played if the physical capability of the contestants does not match the physical achievements required by the game.

The base dimensions of the 60-foot Pinto diamond, the 60-foot Mustang diamond, the 70-foot Bronco diamond and the 80-foot Pony diamond, are the result of extensive experimentation to determine the size diamond on which players of this age can properly play the game.

Pitching distance is also scaled to the ability of the player in proportion to the size of the diamond. In Colt and Palomino leagues, play is conducted on the regulation diamond with bases set at 90 feet and a 60-foot, six inch pitching distance.

The scaled down diamond also applies to the girls softball program. The scaled down diamond allows the players to make all the plays made by the major leaguers. Home runs become a possibility. Outfielders can play in a position proportionately equal to that played by a major leaguer, and the double play, squeeze play and various strategy tactics, which are difficult for adult players and nearly impossible for youngsters on a full size diamond, become a probability rather than an impossibility.

The Major League Baseball diamond was designed for adults just as the uniforms worn by Major Leaguers are designed for adults. We would not expect their uniforms to fit youngsters, nor should we expect their diamond to fit youngsters.

Someday, today's players will fit both the diamond and the uniform used by adults. Rather than have young people sit on the sidelines and wait for that day, PONY Baseball/Softball offers them a diamond and uniform tailored to their needs to see them through the transitional period.

Community Organization

The degree of cooperation necessary among neighbors within the community to organize and maintain the PONY Baseball/Softball organization not only enables people to become better acquainted and join efforts in a common cause, but it also provides an excellent example of the value of community cooperation for the young people who play in the league.

PONY participation helps teach youngsters the value of teamwork, sportsmanship, self-reliance, and sacrifice and can instill a desire for improvement in personal performance.

In addition, PONY can also help a youngster become identified, to find a place among his peers and others within the community. The miracles of modern civilization have created additional leisure time for young people as well as adults. Many of the chores once performed by young people are no longer necessary or are handled easily and simply by some mechanical contrivance. With the removal of these chores has come the removal of much of the responsibility to the family and community, and hence, the opportunity to prove oneself, to identify oneself, within the community.

Ours is an age blessed with an abundance of leisure time, but that blessing can become something of a curse if it is not met with responsibility. Additional leisure time should mean more hours to spend with our young people, not more time to spend away from them.

PONY can involve the entire family as players, managers, coaches, or league officials, or as volunteers in concession stands, field and equipment maintenance, fund-raising and the many other tasks necessary to successful league operation. The involvement of the entire family in such joint effort can become a treasured family experience.

Good playing facilities, uniforms and equipment are a necessary part of the experience of PONY. An organized baseball and softball program is an effective means of teaching young people and they would gain something from the experience if the game were played on a sandlot without uniforms, with a broomstick for a bat and a worn out ball covered with tape. If, however, we can provide better teaching equipment and a better learning environment, we can surely expect the learning experience to be far more effective.

A PONY program most certainly does not provide the complete education and is not the panacea for all of the problems young people must deal with, but it is a tool, a medium whose effectiveness in the development of youth has been proven.

If we want better citizens to make a better world, then we have to begin where better citizens are made, with young people.

National Administration

PONY Baseball, Inc., is administered by an International Board of Directors through a headquarters office staffed by a small force of employees. The office staff is able to operate this multi-phased program, which stretches across the United States and into affiliated organizations in other countries, through the cooperation of more than 80,000 adult volunteers. These are the people who actually operate PONY Baseball/Softball. Field Directors, all unpaid volunteers, operate in association with the office staff in an organizational line that reaches from the league officials in the community through the Field Directors back to the staff and Board of Directors. Through this system, information flows to the leagues, and the questions and suggestions of the leagues flow back to the Board.

In this sense, PONY is a cooperative type program. The paid staff does not operate a league for the community. Rather, it serves as the focal point for the exchange of ideas and information among the leagues, as a center for the analysis and accumulation of experience of league officials throughout the country and as a professional body to develop from the knowledge and experience of thousands of volunteers a more successful pattern of operation for the individual league. The staff serves as a full-time working force to handle publications, paper work and other administrative details.

Field Director volunteers are selected from more experienced league officials who have the time and desire to assist communities, other than their own, in the organization and administration of a PONY program and to plan and supervise tournament competition.

The Board of Directors is comprised largely of Field Directors and entirely of volunteers with the exception of the President and Administrative Director. The Board selects one of its volunteers members, other than the President, Secretary or Treasurer, to serve as Chairman of the Board, generally for a two year term.

Flexibility

Flexibility is a distinct characteristic of PONY Baseball/ Softball. Because of the widely varying conditions of organization, administration and sponsorship from community to community, it has been felt adoption of an arbitrary code is impractical.

Youth baseball and softball leaders within the community know best the needs and desires within their community and can adapt the PONY program to fit the community rather than attempting to adapt the community to fit the program.

League Play

League play is based upon one local team competing against a second local team. Spectators should be familiar with all of the players, not just those on their team. The scene should be one of the community gathered to watch its youngsters in competition with each other, neighbor against neighbor, rather than one of a win-at-any-cost attempt to defeat an opponent.

For this reason, leagues must be composed of a sufficient number of teams to provide interesting competition within the league membership. Leagues shall be comprised of any number of teams. Some communities will have difficulty finding enough players to field more than one or two teams. Where possible, PONY Field Directors will attempt to assist such teams in forming a league with teams from other nearby communities.

Parents

The moms and dads of the players in the league can be an entity the league officers would rather do without, or properly informed and motivated, can be the answer to most of the tasks that face a league official.

Communication in some form is an essential. General meetings of parents, meetings of parents on a team level, or some type of league publication are communicative means available to most leagues. League officers must have the opportunity to explain the theory and basic operating procedures of the league, and to make known their needs for assistance. Generally, the parental pool contains the talent and resources, directly or through their acquaintances, necessary to take care of virtually any need the league has.

Therefore, the parents are made aware of what those needs are and of the necessity for their assistance.

Once parents become an active part of league operation, a large part of the parent problem is solved.

Field Organization

For purposes of administration and tournament elimination, the United States is divided into four Zones, North, East, South, and West (including Alaska and Hawaii). Each is headed by a Vice President who is the coordinator and the direct representative of PONY in the Zone.

The Asia-Pacific Zone is comprised of 14 nations from as far north as Russia to as far south as Australia and New Zealand. New countries are joining PONY every year. The Caribbean Zone is made up of 22 countries, which include the Greater and Lesser Antilles, Latin America and South America. The European Zone includes 24 countries, and with Southeast Asia, is one of the fastest-growing regions for PONY in the world. Comprised of 31 states and one federal district, Mexico is its own Zone.

PONY Baseball/Softball field organizations are set up under a programmatic or geographic plan. Under the programmatic plan, a Division Director is identified primarily with a single age group, such as Bronco League, and would be known as the Bronco Division Director in that Zone. Under the geographic plan, a Division Director handles all of the leagues in all age groups within a specific Region. If he or she were assigned to the West Region of the North Zone that director would be known as the Division Director for the West Regions and would handle all leagues, Shetland through Palomino, in that Region.

Administration then moves through the organizational levels to region, section, district and area levels to the league president. The program is operated in units of four. Four or less leagues comprise an area; four or less areas comprise a district; four or less districts comprise a section; four or less sections comprise a region and four or less regions comprise a zone.

In some instances, where few leagues are located, the area or even district level of administration may not be needed. In no case, however, should the director at the first level have more than four leagues to serve.

In this manner, a director may be expected to become personally acquainted with the officers of the leagues through correspondence, telephone conversation and personal visits.

As they have direct contact with the leagues, the Field Directors at the first level are perhaps the most vital link in the organizational structure, which reaches back to the Board. These directors are in a position to advise directly the leagues of the services and assistance the program offers, to channel back the criticism, suggestions and desires of the league to the Board.

As a cooperative type of corporation, PONY grows from the bottom up. No ivory tower arbitrarily makes decisions. Suggestions are sifted through the Field Director organization to the Board through personal contacts, meetings at various levels and a constant flow of correspondence.

Ideas and suggestions are weighed against a background of experience accumulated from thousands of volunteers with years of effort to their credit. One suggestion may meet with immediate approval, another may be discussed for years before being accepted, another may be discarded and never brought up again and still others are adopted but in a revised form.

PONY is an archive, where experiences of the past may be gathered and stored for accessibility, a clearing house where ideas for the future may be sifted, combined, refined and developed, and a headquarters for the present where day to day administrative and production tasks can be accomplished.

Tournament Play

Tournament play is considered the climax of the regular season. Overemphasis on tournament play, however, is an ever-present danger to the continued success of the league program.

There are many advantages to tournament play, not the least of which is the travel experience players gain and extension of their knowledge through close contact with players from other areas and environments. Players can also learn a great deal about discipline, self-respect and community pride through the medium of tournament travel if their adult leaders make an honest attempt to impart these lessons to them.

Selection of Teams

Most tournament teams are composed of players selected from an entire league because of their individual playing ability. Though some persons voice disapproval of the specially selected tournament team system, there is much to be said for it.

The possibility of being selected on a tournament team because of individual achievement is often the spur that keeps a good player on a mediocre team constantly striving for personal improvement. By the same token, the knowledge that only their individual ability will be considered keeps players on winning teams striving to improve themselves because they know they will not be selected automatically simply by being a member of the winning local league team.

Leagues are permitted to select tournament teams in any manner desired and are limited only by eligibility of the players selected.

Perhaps the most widely used system is that of having each manager list his selections for the tournament team.

At a meeting of managers presided over by the Player Agent, the lists are compared and each player named on all lists becomes a member of the tournament team.

Discussion is then held on other players with a high number of votes and players added to the team as unanimous agreement is reached.

The remaining positions on the team are filled by simple majority vote with the Player Agent voting only in case of tie.

Some leagues prefer to permit the person named as manager of the tournament team to select part of the team, usually the last two or three players.

It should be remembered that the tournament team must be able to function as a team. Selection of five first basemen and no shortstop, for example, is not advisable even though the five first basemen may all have higher batting averages than any of the shortstops.

Tournament Travel

In general, league officials will be responsible for making all travel arrangements for their tournament team.

At the lower levels, this will generally be a matter of lining up a few family automobiles. As the team continues to win and distances increase, decisions must be made.

Time is also an element to consider, as there are usually relatively short intervals between levels of tournament play.

Also to be considered are the costs of food and housing en route to the tournament site, if any. Leagues should plan their travel after a thorough investigation of the possible methods involved. Keep in contact with the Field Directors concerned for their advice and above all, stay within the limitations of a practical budget.

In consideration of travel and feeding expenditures and subsequent awards for the tournament team, remember that the funds you are spending may be needed to operate the league the following year.

Conduct

A tournament team competing away from home represents the community, while en route to and from and while at the site of tournament games. It is only fair to the merchants and civic organizations which make the program possible that tournament teams leave the best possible impression of their community with those with whom they come in contact. Players should be informed well in advance as to what is expected of them in the way of proper dress, attitude and conduct at any time they are representing their community as a member of a tournament team. Manager, Coach, Business Manager.

Leagues may name the manager and coach of the tournament team in any manner they choose. Often the manager of the team leading the league, or of the team that won the league title the previous year, is automatically manager of the tournament team. Some leagues prefer to let the manager select his own coach, and others make the manager of the runner-up team the coach of the tournament team. The business manager should be a person capable of handling financial arrangements for the team and helping with publicity. The business manager should assist the manager and coach in the supervision of the players on and off the field.

In the event the team wins, tournament play involves travel and time away from home and work. These factors should be considered in the selection of the manager, coach and business manager. It is permissible, however, to change the manager, coach or business manager of a team during the course of tournament play.

Tournament Application

The Tournament Application form is provided to all leagues but needs to be filled out only by those leagues desiring to enter tournament competition. When completed, the form is to be mailed with a check for the tournament entry fee to the proper Division Director.

Tournament entry fees go into a fund maintained by the Division Director to assist teams in that zone to meet travel expenses at the higher level tournaments.

League officers should make provisions for sufficient funds to cover all costs incurred by the tournament team through the lower levels of play and be in a position to meet travel costs at the higher levels with the knowledge that some reimbursement will be forthcoming from the travel funds.

Hosting a Tournament

Field Directors locate tournament sites after consideration of many factors involved. Should your league or community be interested in serving as a tournament host at any level of play, contact your Division Director or his representative and inform him of the facilities your group has to offer.

Tournament sponsors must meet certain fixed expenses relative to the feeding, housing and transportation of the participating teams and game expenses, but proceeds above these amounts remain with the local league. If your league has proper facilities and ambitious personnel, you may be able to raise funds for your local league operation through tournament sponsorship.

Host Teams

In most instances when a league agrees to host a level of tournament play, in consideration of the financial obligation assumed by that league, and in an attempt to make that tournament more attractive to potential spectators, the league is allowed to enter a host team in that tournament. The purpose of host teams, to increase attendance, can be met only when the host team plays, and the theory is to have the host team play and not to grant it byes or other advantages to advance the team in the tournament.

Individual Awards

It is strongly recommended that individual awards be presented only on the basis of statistical facts. Awards such as batting championships, figured on a statistical basis, are acceptable, but those which are a matter of opinion, such as most valuable player, or most improved player, are best avoided. As a general rule, awards based on opinion make one player happy but result in disappointment for several other players.