

Monroeville Baseball Association Playing Rules 2021 **(Pony League)**

These rules do not contain a complete set of rules governing play in each specific area of the Pony League age bracket. Play is generally governed by the "Official Rules of Baseball" as published by Major League Baseball (copy can be found at www.mlb.com by entering "baseball basic-rules" in the search engine). These rules contain mainly those exceptions to the above mentioned documents which are necessary for our "in-house" youth program.

Playing Field:

1. Distance from the pitchers rubber to the back tip of home plate is 54 feet.
2. The bases will be 80 feet from the back tip of home plate to the back of the base, with the distance to back of the second base bag set at 113.2 feet.
3. A rectangular batter's box measuring 4 foot wide and 6 foot in length will be installed.
4. Fields should be chalked and selected areas lightly fluffed with rake. All field preparation work should be completed at least 20 minutes prior to scheduled start time.
5. The umpire crew chief ultimately decides whether or not the questionable playing surface would be safe
6. If the field is unplayable, the HOME team manager MUST notify the Chief of Umpires – Mitch Adams 412-856-8846. Notice MUST be one (1) hour and thirty (30) minutes PRIOR TO GAME TIME, with Saturday notification two (2) hours PRIOR TO GAME TIME on cell number 412-759-5100. The manager must then call the PONY League Commissioner as well as the opposing manager.
7. At the completion of the game, bases MUST be taken off the field and put into the storage boxes. Base mounting shafts should be cleaned out and rubber caps MUST be re-installed.

Length of the Game:

1. Games will start promptly at the scheduled time, with forfeit time for games being 15 minutes after the scheduled start time.
2. Four innings will constitute a legal/official game. Three and one half innings shall constitute a legal/official game if the home team is ahead. A legal/official game tied is considered a complete game and will not be rescheduled unless required by the Commissioner.
3. Once the game begins it is the umpire's responsibility to call the game because of darkness and/or field/weather conditions.
4. Suspended games not yet legal/official, will resume from the point that the game was suspended. Tie games not rescheduled will count as ½ win and ½ loss per team.

General Rules:

1. A minimum of 8 players is needed for a game to begin (a game can be determined to be a forfeit by 15 minutes after it's start time, if minimum number of Pony League approved players are not present). The opposing team shall provide an out-fielder to the team with 8 players until the 9th player arrives. The 9th player must arrive by the top of the 4th inning. (if the 9th player does not arrive by the top of the 4th inning the game is determined to be a forfeit) A team must play and finish with a minimum of nine (9) players. Penalty result is game forfeiture, unless 9th player had to leave the game due to an injury or illness during the game. These rules are enforced in the playoffs but during the regular season please make every effort to play games with call-ups or players available with opposing teams supplying outfielders. Forfeits do not benefit the kids that are present for the games. Every team will make the playoffs so avoid forfeits. Forfeited games can be ruled to be played at a later date by the league commissioner.
 - **Note:** When a team is using only 8 players they will NOT be charged an automatic out for the 9th batter each time that batters time to bat comes around. The opposing team can choose to bat only 8 players also, until the 9th player arrives for the team with only 8.
2. All decisions of the umpires are final.
3. The HOME team manager will determine if the weather conditions permit the starting of the game. Please give an effort to bring the field into a playable condition before the game, but use common sense methods only. If games are cancelled and not made up, each team will get one (1) loss.
4. The HOME team is listed second on the schedule and occupies the first base side of field.
5. When the field is being lined with chalk for games, there will be no practicing/warm-ups on the field. [Home team manager should have the field lined at least 20 minutes prior to game starting time.]

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There will be seven (7) innings in a game. Extra innings will be played if time allows. [Restrictions on field lighting, etc. will be posted prior to season's start]

6. The manager of the WINNING team is responsible for notifying the Pony League Commissioner of the score, pitchers, pitchers innings, and pitch counts within one (1) hour after the game. Games not reported will be recorded as ½ loss for each team and treated as a tie. Any discrepancies or arguments during the game must also be reported. *[See pitching rules; both team's innings & names]
7. Scheduling and rescheduling of games will be the responsibility of the Pony League Commissioner. It is the HOME team manager's responsibility to notify the PONY Commissioner of rainouts.
8. The HOME team has control of the field until twenty (20) minutes before the start time of the game. The VISITING team will then have the field until five (5) minutes prior to the start of the game. Ground rules will then be given, umpires fee paid and play to follow immediately.

Playing Rules:

- 1) The infield fly rule is in effect.
- 2) "Head-first" slides are **NOT** permitted. Sliding into first base, while not illegal, should be discouraged.
- 3) If in the umpire's judgment, a runner intentionally runs into a fielder to avoid a tag or to jar the ball loose, the runner will be called out. Runners should be taught to slide into the base on close plays and to avoid dangerous collisions. On double-plays between second base and first base, runners should always slide into the base area or give themselves up by getting out of the fielders way. (no "major-league" style break up plays will be permitted at second base)
- 4) Batters and base runners must wear batting helmets at all times when in the field of play. A player could be ejected for removing his/her helmet while still on the field and not behind the fences.
- 5) No batter shall throw the bat at the end of a swing. Penalty could either be – one strike called or ejection by the umpire. A "thrown bat" is that which is dangerous or potentially dangerous to players, coaches or umpires. Remember – safety first.
- 6) A 10-Run rule will apply. The team with a 10 run lead by the end of the 5th inning, (4 ½ if the home team is ahead), or any time thereafter, will be declared the winner.
- 7) All players must play a minimum of six (6) consecutive outs, and bat at least once. Because of the 10-Run Rule, be sure to have all your player substitutions completed prior to the "END" of the game. Team "A" cannot "10-Run" team "B" until all of team "A" players have met the "Minimum Play Rule" requirements. A team will be penalized with a forfeit, if all players present do not meet the requirements of this minimum play rule in a seven inning game.
- 8) There is free substitution on defense (except for the pitching rules)
- 9) Each team is to bat their entire lineup in a game.
 - a) Exception: If a team has more players than the other team, the team with the more players may choose to bat the same number as the other team.

Example: Team A has 12 players. Team B has 15 players.
Team B can choose to bat 12 players (the same amount as Team A).
 - b) There is no change to the MANDATORY minimum time a player must play defensively.

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Pitching Rules:

1. Any rostered team member may pitch, subject to the restrictions of the pitching rules.
2. Pitchers shall not pitch in more than four (4) innings on the same calendar day or throw any more than 75 pitches on the same calendar day, whichever comes first.
 - If a pitcher throws his 75th pitch in the middle of a batter he will be allowed to complete that at-bat and then be removed from pitching for that game
3. Pitchers shall be allowed to pitch in no more than eight (8) innings in any one calendar week. A calendar week is from 12:01 am Monday to 12 Midnight the following Sunday.
4. When pitching in more than one game on the same calendar day, pitchers may pitch any combination of innings in those games provided they do not exceed the above maximum number of innings in a calendar day (or weekly totals). The pitcher also shall not exceed the pitch count stated above for that day, if he pitches in more than one game.
5. Pitchers shall have at least 48 hours rest after pitching three (3) or more innings on the same calendar day. [⇒ *Which includes doubleheaders on the same day!* ⇐]
6. The 48 hour “rest rule” is computed from the scheduled starting time of the game in which the pitching occurred, or, in games which begin more than two hours after the scheduled starting time, the actual starting time of the game shall be used to interpret this rule.
7. After throwing one pitch to a batter, the pitcher shall be considered as having pitched in one inning.
8. A pitcher is charged with the number of innings pitched in the specific calendar day and week in which they are pitched.
9. Any pitcher withdrawn from the mound and lineup, or a pitcher who is withdrawn from the mound and stays in the game at another position, shall not be permitted to pitch again in the same game.
10. If a relief pitcher comes in “cold” the umpire shall allow the pitcher to warm up properly with at least ten (10) warm-up pitches.
11. Pitchers in violation of any of the pitching rules shall be considered an ineligible player.
12. The pitcher named in the batting order turned in prior to the start of the game, shall pitch to the first batter or any substitute batter until such batter is put out or reaches first base. Unless the pitcher sustains injury or illness which, in the judgment of the umpire-in-chief, incapacitates him/her from pitching.

Batter's Circle:

1. A batter's circle shall be made of such a radius as to allow for the purpose of “on-deck” batters warming up by taking practice swings.
2. Any player swinging a bat outside the designated circle will be pulled from the game for 3 innings on first infraction. Any player walking through the “on-deck” circle while a player is warming up is just as guilty and is also fined 3 innings.
3. Only one player is permitted to be “on-deck” at a time.
4. Subsequent infractions, penalty will be the expulsion from the game. No exceptions. A team found to have several infractions of this rule will have its manager/coaches reviewed by the commissioner.

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Equipment:

1. League equipment will be issued to each team manager who will be responsible for its return, per the Manager/Coaches Code of Conduct document.
2. Players must be in FULL uniform at all times. Hats are considered part of the full uniform, and if a player arrives at the game without it, the opposing manager will be notified and the child will be allowed to play with a substitute baseball style hat.
3. Metal spikes (cleats) are prohibited.
4. Pitchers are not allowed to wear wristbands, or a batting glove under their fielding glove. These are distractions to the batter. If inclement weather is a problem, the uniform jersey must be worn outside of all other clothing.
5. No players are permitted to wear any jewelry of any kind. Penalty is automatic ejection. If a player has a medical bracelet or necklace, then manager should alert the umpire and opposing manager prior to the start of the game.
6. Players are permitted to use their own bats provided they meet all MBA Pony League specifications. **Bats are to be no more than 2 5/8" in maximum diameter and the bat ratio should be no more than -8. (example: -7.5's are allow and -9.5's are not allowed)**
7. Intentional and flagrant throwing of any equipment equals automatic ejection and possible additional suspension by the Commissioner.

Sidelines:

1. No throwing or hitting balls on the sidelines during the game. Only pitchers being "warmed-up" for future entry into the game are permitted to be throwing. The catcher must wear an official catcher's mask at all times when pitchers are warming-up.
2. All players must be under manager's control at all times. Assign an adult to control your bench and maintain control of your players when your team is at bat. We suggest you have parents assist with the batting order organizational tasks, and overall bench behavior during the game.
3. Under no circumstances during a normal game situation should a coach touch a player while the ball is in play. This includes pulling a player back onto a base or pushing a player towards a base. Voice and hand signals only.
4. Base coaches MUST stay within the restraints clearly marked on the field in chalk as "coach's boxes". Base coaches should also practice all the items covered in the Managers/Coaches Code of Conduct document.

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Umpires:

1. The home team responsible for the **\$35.00** umpire fee per umpire for each game, cash only, payable before the game begins, during the ground rules. Managers will be issued the entire game fee amount from the MBA.
2. If only one umpire performs the duties, he will be paid **1 ½** times the rate for an umpire for the current year. If umpires arrive and the field is unplayable, and proper notification was not given, those umpires will receive **\$15.00**. The umpire will determine if the field is safe for play at game time, he will then be awarded the travel fee. If the game is called prior to the completion of **3** innings, the umpire will receive **\$15.00**.
3. In the case of rainouts, cancellation must be phoned in to Mitch Adams at W: **412-856-8846** or C: **412-759-5100** as mentioned on page 1 of this document. If the manager fails to notify the Chief of Umpires of a rain cancellation, and an umpire shows up for the game, the umpire is entitled to **\$15.00**, and the home team manager is liable for this payment.
4. If the game suspended, and it is not a legal game, umpire is entitled to **\$15.00**. **\$15.00** will be paid upon completion of the game, to the umpire who is present at the game. [If an umpire works more than **3 ½** innings of a game anytime during the season, they must be paid full fee.]
5. Keep accurate records in the game score book and make sure the umpire signs the home team score book after the game.
6. The umpire can leave with payment by 15 minutes after the scheduled start of the game, if the field or team is not ready.
7. All judgment calls are final and not subject to any protest committee actions.
8. Remember, the HOME team manager is responsible for making the decision to cancel a game, and must call the following people in case of a cancellation: **a.) Mitch Adams b.) Opposing Manager and c.) Pony League Commissioner**

Safety:

1. You are not babysitters, but however are volunteers giving your time and effort to your children and your community's children. The rules protect you, the children, the MBA Association and the game. Make sure there is an adult present at all times who will be responsible for EACH child, otherwise the child does not play. How will you deal with an emergency on the field at a game, or practice, if a parent/guardian is not present? Insist on parental/guardian involvement and follow the rules approved by the MBA Board of Directors.

General Conduct:

1. Any player, coach or parent who provokes or participates in a fight either before, during, or after an MBA "event" will be subject to review by the Executive Board. Any manager, coach or parent who is ejected by an umpire will immediately cease the argument and leave the field of play. Both managers must report all incidents in writing using the "Ejection/Misconduct" form and the umpire must note in the score book and sign. The incident will be subject to review by the Executive Board and possible additional suspensions may be assessed.
2. All managers will control their players so as not to harass or hinder other players, coaches or umpires. Coaches are responsible for their own benches and supporters.

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Miscellaneous:

1. Field specific ground rules will apply as agreed upon, prior to each game, during the umpire conference at home plate.
2. Managers and/or coaches must not leave the field until all participating players have been picked up and/or have rides home.
3. Home team is also responsible for supplying two (2) MBA Pony League approved Wilson A1075 PL-1 baseballs to the umpire prior to the game. No other baseballs may be used unless approved by the Pony League Commissioner.
4. No manager, coach, player or fan will be allowed behind the backstop. Managers and umpires are responsible for enforcement. The umpires have the right to hold up the game, until the backstop area is cleared out.
5. Under no circumstances will the MBA be allowed to dig trenches for field drainage. If raking and pushing of standing water back into the playing area (not into the outfield grass) cannot bring the playing field up to playable condition, then the game should be cancelled.
6. All managers should carry field permits to all games and practices.
7. No parking on the paved "road" leading up to the playing field at Monroeville Park. The managers are permitted to only "drop-off" the equipment bags and then move their vehicles down to the parking lot. (This rule will be enforced by the League and local Police.)
8. **Alcohol is prohibited.**
9. A Bronco League player may play in any game, but only if the Pony League team has nine (9) or less players planning on attending. The younger player being "called-up" must play in the outfield only! No exceptions. If the Bronco player does arrive at the field, then they MUST be put last in batting order and played defensively only after the **13's** and **14's** have gotten in their required innings.
10. All game times are posted and must be adhered to. Managers and coaches can not change a game time or the scheduling of umpires. The umpire scheduling centers around these posted times. Only the Pony League Commissioner will reschedule the rainouts.

Protests:

1. A protest may be considered by an appointed Protest Committee of the MBA (per our by-laws) when based upon a violation or interpretation of a playing rule. To begin the process for consideration, the following must occur: the game stopped at the occurrence, the protest noted in the official score book, and signed by the umpire with phone number. A written protest must then be filed to the league commissioner within 48 hours for evaluation.

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