

MUSTANG RULES - Mustang League rules are governed by Official Baseball rules supplemented or superseded by PONY and/or HYAA rules. The following rules are specific for **Spring 2009** HYAA Mustang Baseball.

Playing rules

Field dimensions: Baselines 60 feet; pitching mound to back tip of home plate shall be 44 feet.

***Run limit:** A team can score a maximum of 5 runs per inning at bat. Once the team reaches this limit, the side is retired. There is a maximum of 5 runs in the last inning also. Once a team is mathematically out (e.g. a team is up by 11 runs after 4 complete innings), it is up to the Head Coach of the losing team whether to continue play or not. Completion of the game is encouraged.

Count: Mustang will use a count of 3 strikes & 5 balls. Ball 5 is a dead ball – runners may NOT steal. Intentionally walking a batter is not allowed. In addition, a ball that strikes a portable pitching mound used at any of our scheduled game fields is considered a live ball (just like any other natural dirt mound).

Stealing: Players are allowed to steal second and third base. Base runners are not permitted to lead off. Base runner must maintain contact with the base until the ball has reached or passed the catcher before starting their steal attempt. If a player leaves early, the runner will be called out. A runner can tag-up and advance to 2nd base, 3rd base or home plate on a fly ball by remaining in contact with the base until (after) the ball is first touched by a fielder.

Delayed Steals: Delayed steals are not allowed, examples of this are as follows:

1. The runner breaks after the ball has left the catchers hand in the process of being returned to the pitcher or the pitcher has control of the ball.
2. The base runner intentionally runs only a few steps with the intention of baiting a throw from the catcher and stops. However, this is a judgment call by the umpire and the “baiting” needs to be very obvious. It should not just be an honest mistake by a young player who misunderstood a “steal” sign and took a few steps in the direction of the next base and turned around and came back. Nor should it be a player who instinctively is almost at the next base and when he sees the ball in the baseman’s glove (a sure out) he turns and goes back in the other direction.
3. **If the umpire deems a delayed steal has occurred, the runner will be made to return to the previous base. A runner can not steal on any ball that is misplayed by the pitcher on a return throw from the catcher.**

Stealing home: A runner on third may not steal home. There are two exceptions:

1. In a steal attempt from second to third and the catcher throws makes an errant throw to third, the base runner is permitted to advance to home at his/her own peril.
2. Where there are runners on first and third base and the catcher throws to second base in attempt to throw the runner out, the base runner on third may advance at his/her peril.

Sliding: There is no mandatory slide rule, even at Home Plate. However, if at anytime a player intentionally forearms a defensive player in an attempt to be safe, the batter shall be automatically called out at the discretion of the umpire. Head first sliding is also not allowed.

***Dropped third strike:** The batter is out and may not advance. Runners on first and second MAY advance.

Infield Fly Rule – Does not apply. The batter is not automatically out.

Bunting: Bunting is allowed; however, once a batter gets into a bunting position/stance, he can either bunt, attempt to bunt, or pull back and take the pitch. He can NOT pull back out of the bunting stance, lean back and swing away. If he does pull back and swing away, the batter is automatically out.

Overthrows: A runner may advance as many bases as possible at his/her own peril on an overthrow, except when a ball goes out of bounds (e.g. rolls into the dugout, etc.) the runner is given one additional base.

Play stoppage: Play is considered over when time-out is called or once the ball is under the control of the Pitcher.

***Time Limit:** Our official games will typically be 2 hours max with no new innings to be started after 1hr 50 minutes. However; the only exception to this rule is for any evening games played during the week that are “stacked” back-to-back where for example we have a 6:00pm start time followed by another 7:45pm start time on the same field. In this case the time limit will be a max of 1hr 45 minutes (instead of 2 hrs.) with no new innings to be started after 1hr 30 minutes (instead of 1 hr 50 minutes). This will apply to both the first and second games. The time limit determination is made based on the start time called by the umpire at the beginning of the game and the time the umpire has when the last out is made in the bottom of the preceding inning.

Games will consist of 6 innings. Intentionally stalling for time in order to avoid another inning being played is strictly prohibited. Extra innings may be played as long as it is within the defined time limits. The official time will be kept by the umpire. In case of inclement weather, a game is considered complete after 4 complete innings. Please clear your dugouts immediately following your game so the next game can proceed.

Scorebook – The Home Team scorebook is the official record. The Head Coach of the Home Team shall report the final score of the game to the Mustang League Commissioner within 48 hours. All of the following should be recorded; at-bats, hits, runs, outs, fielder’s choice, errors, strikeouts, bases on balls, innings pitched & the pitch count.

Player batting order– All players present for a team will bat in a successive order for the entire game. **Only 9 defensive players will be allowed on the field at any given time (e.g. 3 outfielders), a minimum of 7 players is needed for a game; otherwise the game is a forfeit. If a player arrives late he may be inserted into the line-up and must bat in the last position.**

***Player substitution** – No player may sit out a second inning until all other players have or are in the process of sitting out one inning. Violation of the substitution rule must be corrected immediately if identified by either Head Coach. Willful violation of this rule will result in forfeit and/or Head Coach Suspension. Pinch running is only allowed when an injury has occurred or when the player catching in the next inning is on base with two outs (therefore this does not apply to the bottom of the last inning). Replacing the catcher is encouraged to speed up the game. The pinch runner must be the last person that got out in that inning.

Protective equipment – Catchers must wear protective equipment and a cup. No player can catch in a Mustang Game without a cup. A cup is also recommended for all other players, but is not required. Helmets must be worn by all batters. Metal cleats are prohibited; rubber molded cleats are allowed.

Baseball Bats - All bats must be regulation baseball and be no more than 2 3/4” in diameter.

Mustang Pitching Rules – For the following pitching rules, as soon a pitcher delivers one pitch to a batter he/she is deemed to have pitched in one inning.

Same Day Limit: A pitcher may not pitch more than 3 innings in one day. If 3 batters are hit in any one inning or a total of 4 in a game by the same pitcher, the pitcher must come out of the game or be substituted to a different position. On the 2nd visit to the pitching mound in the same inning or on the 3rd visit in a game by a coach, the pitcher must also come out of the game or be substituted to a different position.

***Pitch Count:** The maximum number of pitches that can be thrown by an individual pitcher in a single game is 55. If the 55th pitch occurs in the middle of an inning the pitcher must be replaced at that time. However, the pitcher is allowed to finish pitching to an individual batter if the 55th pitch is delivered in the middle of a count. There are no other exceptions.

Weekly Limit: A pitcher may not pitch more than 8 innings during a seven day period beginning at 12:01AM Monday ending 11:59PM Sunday

40 Hour Rest Rule: If a pitcher pitches a third inning he/she must rest 40 hours from the scheduled starting time of the game in which the pitching occurred until the start of their next pitching appearance.

Pitcher can not return to pitch - Any pitcher withdrawn from the line up or substituted to a different position may not return to pitch in the same game.

Umpires – Umpires are to be treated with the utmost respect at all times. It is not permissible for coaches to yell, strongly debate, or in any way show disrespect to umpires. It is the Head Coach’s responsibility to ensure that all Assistant Coaches, spectators, parents, and players maintain respect for the umpires.

Suspension – Any coach or player that is thrown out of a game, regardless of the reason will receive an automatic one game suspension. Furthermore, the matter will be referred to the League Commissioner and the Director of Baseball for review and possible further sanctions.

Protest – The proper procedure for a protest of a call is to call “time” and for the umpire to grant you time. Then you need to go speak with the umpire in a controlled and subdued manor. You have the right to an explanation of a call or rule. However, you must understand and respect that much of baseball rules is left to the sole judgment of the umpire. Although you may plead your case, you must accept their decision as final.

Note 1: An asterisk (*) above denotes a difference between the HYAA Mustang Rules and the North Meck Pony League (NMPL) Rules.

Note 2: Please have all parents and players refrain from bringing and/or eating peanuts in the dugouts and field of play due to players with severe allergies.

By signature below the Head Coach understands and agrees to abide by these rules during all HYAA Mustang games, and further agrees to inform his assistant coaches and associated player's parents of these rules as well.

Mustang Team Name (Print): _____

Head Coach (Print): _____

Head Coach (Signature): _____ Date: _____