

GENEVA BASEBALL ASSOCIATION

2009 PONY LEAGUE RULES

(Last revision - February 1, 2009)

PURPOSE:

This is a competitive league with emphasis on full skill development and good sportsmanship. Play will be conducted on that basis. Rules as published by the Pony Baseball, Inc. will apply with the following amendments:

OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES:

I. GENERAL:

1. A game shall be forfeited by a team that cannot field a minimum of eight (8) players at the scheduled start time or any time during the game. If a game is played at any time with eight players, the ninth (9th) position (or vacant position) in the batting order shall not be considered an out.
2. The legal age of players will be any youth who will attain the age of thirteen (13) years before August 1st of the current season, and who will not attain the age of fifteen (15) years before August 1st of the current season. Players participating in the in-house program will have the option to play at their school grade level, with the understanding that he/she will be restricted from any travel team tournaments if their legal age violates tournament rules.
3. Regulation game length is seven innings. The length of the game shall not be limited unless terminated by darkness or field availability. Umpire(s) decision with regard to darkness is final. In the event that there is another game scheduled on the field immediately after the game being played, the length of the game will be limited to not starting a new inning after the game is in progress for 2 and ½ hours.¹ The score of any game terminated due to darkness or field availability shall revert back to the last completed inning. Five innings constitutes a complete game (4 and ½ in the event that the home team is ahead). Any game terminated for any reason prior to that point shall be considered a suspended game and resumed at a later date at the discretion of the Pony League President. Any game ending in a tie will be continued until a winner is determined.
4. Mercy Rule:

¹ The exception to this rule occurs when games are scheduled *less than* 2 and ½ hours apart on the same field. For this case, the length of first game will be limited to not starting a new inning after the game is in progress for 2 and ¼ hours.

After the losing team bats in the 5th inning, if losing by more than 20 runs the game is ended. After the losing team bats in the 6th inning, if losing by more than 15 runs the game is ended. The mercy rule will also apply in the end of season tournament.

5. During the course of the season, every player must participate on defense for a minimum of twelve (12) outs per game. Other than at the pitching position, there are no limitations on the number of times a player may re-enter a game at a defensive position.
6. Formal protests are to be handled by the Pony League President.
7. The throwing of helmets, bats, or equipment by coaches or players will not be tolerated. Managers will discipline coaches or players as needed.
8. Postponed or suspended games are to be scheduled by the Pony League President.
9. Uniforms are to be worn properly (i.e., shirts should be tucked in, the proper socks, belts and hats **must** be worn, etc.).
10. Disciplinary action toward a player (beyond benching during a game in progress) must be approved in advance by the Pony League President. The Geneva Baseball Association Board of Directors (hereafter referred to as the "Executive Board") must approve any disciplinary action toward a manager, coach or association member.
11. In order to provide a source of replacement players, the Pony League President will assign two Major League teams to each Pony League team. When a manager has knowledge that he will have less than ten (10) players for a given game, he may arrange for replacement players from (and only from) the manager's two affiliated Major League teams. In the event that a manager brings up a replacement player(s), both the Pony League President, and the opposing manager (at game time) should be notified. Replacement players must bat last in the lineup, and will not play more defensive innings than a regular rostered player. Replacement players may not pitch or catch.
12. If an umpire fails to show by game start time, both managers will agree upon a suitable umpire substitute. This umpire substitute will be the only umpire allowed on the field and will remain for the entire game, or until the scheduled umpire arrives.
13. All rostered players are allowed to participate in all games (including resumed games) at all times. A player who arrives after a game has started will be assigned to the last spot in the batting order.
14. Any player, coach or parent who is ejected from a game will be suspended from the following regular season game or playoff game.

II. PONY LEAGUE DRAFT:

The position of players within the draft will be determined as follows:

Prior to the draft, the Pony League President will obtain a list of players who have registered for the upcoming season. Based upon this list, the Pony League President shall identify "new players",² and instruct these new players to participate in a "new player evaluation" session. At this session all new players will be evaluated by Pony League managers and coaches for the purpose of placing these players in the proper position within the draft.

Using player evaluation forms from both the previous season³ and the "new player evaluation" session, the Pony League President (with the help of Pony League managers) will determine the position of players in each round of the draft for each age group. All second year pony players will be grouped with the higher age group.

On draft night, the managers of each team will draft players, as follows:

Each age group will be drafted separately, and the players in the higher age group will be selected first, beginning with round 1 (best evaluations).

For each age group, the Pony League President will randomly assign the selection order for each "odd" round of the draft (beginning with round 1). The selection order for each "even" round of the draft will be in the reverse order of the previous "odd" round. For instance, let's say that during round 1 of the draft, the Cubs drafted first, followed by the White Sox, Yankees, and Cardinals. Because the Cardinals drafted last during round 1, they would then draft first during round 2, and therefore the draft order for round 2 would be the Cardinals, followed by the Yankees, White Sox and Cubs. Each team will be able to choose a player in each round for each age group, unless coaches' children are assigned to those rounds.⁴ The process will continue for each round to the conclusion of the rounds in that age group. At the end of the age group, if there is an uneven amount of players remaining to complete another round, they will be pooled with the remaining players at the end of the next age group to make a final round. Finally, trades of same age can be addressed on draft night and must be approved by all managers and the Pony League President.⁵

III. BATTING:

1. While his team is at bat, a manager, coach, other adult, or player shall be allowed in each coach's box (1st and 3rd base).
2. "New players" are those players who did not participate in Geneva Baseball during the previous season.
3. At the end of each season, the League President will gather all player evaluation forms(provided by the League President at the beginning of the season) from each manager.
4. On each team, the manager's son/daughter and one coach's son/daughter will be drafted in the round assigned.
5. The goal of the draft is to assemble teams of equal ability. The League President should veto all trades that (in his judgment) threaten the competitive balance of the league.

2. No manager, coach, or player, other than the on-deck batter, is allowed on the on-deck portion of the field.
3. All team members present at a game will bat in continuous rotation.
4. Fake bunts/slashing will NOT be allowed. An automatic OUT will be called and the player will be ejected from the game.

IV. FIELDING:

1. All catchers **are required** to wear an athletic supporter with a cup while participating as a catcher in games, practices, and warm-ups. It is **strongly suggested** that **all** players wear this safety equipment at all times.
2. In all games and practices, the catcher must wear full catcher's gear (shin guards, chest protector, mask, and cup) while catching.
3. The wearing of cleated footwear will be permitted, this includes steel spikes or plastic cleats, and is approved for any player, coach or manager during games and practices.
4. All players in the GBA Pony League will be expected and required to wear the Team's uniform, and show respect for same by wearing it properly. Said uniform will be comprised of and worn as follows; Team Hat - worn bill forward, Team Jersey - worn tucked in at all times, Team pants and belt - worn at the waist, and Team socks - worn up to bottom of team pants.
5. **Uniform violations** - The umpire has the authority to stop play if he considers the player has not sufficiently restored their uniform to order. If in the mind of the umpire, a player is mindfully or repeatedly, not sufficiently restoring the uniform to fit condition, that player and team will be in violation of the uniform code and cited for same. After the opening pitch, each player will be allowed one warning citation and each team, two player warning citations per game. On the second citation per player or third citation for the team, inclusive of any game opening citations, the offending player will be called out and removed from the field of play for the balance of the game for demonstrating a disregard and disrespect for themselves, their team mates, their opponents, the league and game of baseball at large.

V. PITCHING:

1. A manager or coach is permitted to warm-up a pitcher at home plate or on the sidelines.

2. Each pitcher will be afforded one balk warning per game. Upon the first occurrence of the umpire calling a balk, the umpire shall provide a balk warning. This warning shall consist of the umpire calling the manager to the mound, and explaining to the manager and pitcher what infraction constituted the balk call. Upon the second occurrence of the umpire calling a balk, the balk will stand and runners advance accordingly. During a balk warning the ball shall be considered dead.
3. In order to speed up play, the pitcher will be allowed a maximum of five (5) warm-up pitches at the beginning of an inning. A relief pitcher will be allowed a maximum of eight (8) warm-up pitches when he enters the game.
5. Pitchers shall not pitch in more than seven innings on the same calendar day.
6. Pitchers shall not pitch in more than five innings in any given game.
7. When pitching in more than one game on the same calendar day, a given pitcher may pitch any combination of innings in those games, provided that the pitcher does not exceed 7 innings total during that calendar day, and provided that the pitcher does not exceed 5 innings in any given game, and provided that the pitcher adheres to the additional pitching restrictions that are outlined in Pitching Rule 7 and Pitching Rule 8 (below).
8. The total number of innings in which the combination of all second year players on a given team can pitch in a given game is no more than 5 innings. This is true regardless of the length of a given game.
9. In addition to the above pitching restrictions, based upon the number of games which a team plays during a given week, an individual player is restricted in the number of innings⁶ in which he can pitch, as outlined in Table 1.

6 As soon as a pitcher delivers one pitch to a batter the pitcher shall be considered as having pitched in one inning.

Table 1: Number of Pitching Innings Allowed Any Individual Player

Number of Games in a Week⁷	Innings Allowed
1 Game	5 Innings
2 Games	9 Innings
3 Games	9 Innings
4 Games	9 Innings
5 Games	11 Innings

Example 1: The White Sox are playing their third and last game of a given week. Player A is a first year player who has already pitched in a total of 8 innings during the White Sox's first two games of the week. By rule, Player A is only allowed to pitch 1inning during the White Sox's third game of that week.

Example 2: The White Sox are playing their second and last game of a given week. In the White Sox's first game, no second year players pitched. In their second game, by Pitching rule 7, the White Sox can pitch their second year players for no more than five innings total. If they play seven defensive innings in their second game, they must pitch first year players at least two innings.

10.If a player pitches in four (4) or more innings on the same calendar day, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed. This will be referred to as the "pitcher rest rule". Table 2 further illustrates the "pitcher rest rule".

Table 2: Pitcher Rest Periods

If a player pitches in four or more innings on:	And is still eligible, that player can pitch again on:
--	---

⁷ A calendar week is from 12:01 a.m. Monday to 12 midnight the following Sunday.

Sunday	Tuesday
Monday	Wednesday
Tuesday	Thursday
Wednesday	Friday
Thursday	Saturday
Friday	Sunday
Saturday	Monday

11. If a team plays three days in a row, or three games in two days, the pitcher rest rule is waived.
12. A pitcher is charged with the number of innings pitched in the specific calendar day and week in which they are pitched, regardless of whether they are normal league games, postponed games (rain dates), the completion of suspended games, or the completion of tie games.
13. Any pitcher withdrawn from the mound and/or 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.

VI. BASE RUNNING:

1. No head first sliding is allowed (except when returning to a base). If a runner slides head first, that runner will be called out. (This is done for the safety of the players.)
2. When an attempt is made by a fielder to tag a runner out, or force a runner out at second base, third base, or home plate, it is the runner's responsibility to slide into the base in order to prevent any type of collision. If the runner fails to do this, the umpire shall call the runner out.
3. The umpire's decisions on the sliding rules are final.
4. In order to speed up play, if a catcher is on base with two (2) outs, he must be replaced by a pinch runner. That pinch runner will be the last player to make an out.
5. A runner shall NOT attempt to jump over a defensive player to avoid being tagged.

VII. MANAGERS:

1. The Pony League President shall select managers (subject to the approval of the Executive Board).
2. The Executive Board, by an affirmative vote of the majority of the total number of Officers currently serving terms on the Board, may suspend, expel, or terminate the assignment of any manager or assistant coach whenever, in its judgment, the best interest of the Association will be served thereby. Any such action taken by the Executive Board shall be justifiable, without prejudice and with cause.
3. The Pony League President must approve all assistant coaches.
4. The Pony League President shall not be permitted to serve as a manager in the Pony League.

VIII. IN-HOUSE ALL STARS:

Each year the league will conduct an all-star game to be held "in-house" with the regular Pony League rules governing play except as follows:

1. An equal number of players will be chosen from each team. The players of each team will elect their all-star representatives, with the manager having at least one (1) player selection. The Executive Board will determine the exact number of players selected by each party.
2. The name of each player elected to the all-star game shall be given to the Pony League President,⁸ who will be responsible for the assignment of the players onto two competitively balanced teams. These teams shall be called the "American" and "National" Teams.
3. The two managers with the best win/loss records at the end of the regular season shall serve as managers of each in-house all-star team.
4. During the in-house all-star game, pitchers will be limited to a maximum of two (2) innings pitched.
5. With assistance from the Travel League President, following the in-house all-star game, all league managers (will determine the in-house travel all-star players (13 player maximum). All in-house players are eligible for selection to this team. The in-house managers (using ballots) will select at least ten (10) players. The manager of this team will be allowed at least two picks. The Travel League President (with assistance from the Pony League President) will select the in-house travel all-star team manager. All attempts will be made to select a different manager in consecutive years. The manager (with approval of the Travel League President) will select the coaches for this team.

IX. IN-HOUSE TOURNAMENT RULES:

⁸ All-star votes from players must be collected from each player, in writing, and submitted to the League President no later than two weeks prior to the all-star game.

1. The format of the tournament shall be determined by the Pony League President and approved by the Executive Board.
2. All regular season rules shall apply to the in-house tournament. The only exception will be that the "pitcher rest rule"⁹ shall be waived.
3. In all rounds of the tournament, the home team will be determined by a coin flip.
4. The seeding of teams will be done through a seeded tournament, or by a similar method that encourages the development of players during the regular season. The exact method used to seed the teams will be determined prior to the draft. Seeding will be based upon a team's overall won/loss record, if that is a tie, then those two teams' head to head record, if a tie, then runs scored, then runs allowed head to head. If that is a tie, then the flip of a coin. All decisions made by the Pony League President, and the GBA Board regarding the In House Post Season Tournament are final, no exceptions.
5. All tournament games will be completed so that at least seven (7) innings are played. Any games that are suspended for any reason will be resumed at the point of suspension. All pitching statistics from the previous week will carry over if the game is completed in the following week.

X. TRAVEL

1. The travel team and its rostered players will not be allowed to participate in the regular/post season in-house play.

⁹ See **Section V** for details concerning the "pitcher rest rule".