

Oak Park Mustang Rules and Regulations – Revised 2016

Overview: Mustang is a teaching and competitive baseball league consisting of 12 - 16 teams. Regular season league play begins in April and concludes with a two-tier, double-elimination playoff tournament in late June.

1. **Base and Pitching Distances:**

Bases	Pitching
60 feet	44 feet
2. **Equipment**
 - a. Regulation size home plate, pitching plate and bases are recommended. An official ball, distributed by OPYBS, is required in league and tournament play.
 - b. The ball shall weigh not less than five nor more than five and one-quarter ounces (142-149 gms.) avoirdupois, and measure not less than nine nor more than nine and one-quarter inches (22.9-23.5 cm) in circumference. Baseballs, specially manufactured and designed in such a way as to reduce injuries, or the seriousness of injuries, are approved for use in local league play.
 - c. Metal, graphite or ceramic bats, manufactured specifically for baseball play, which are round and not more than two and five-eighth inches in diameter at the thickest part, nor more than 42 inches (106.7 cm) in length, are acceptable. Wood bats are not permitted.
 - d. Rubber soled or rubber-cleated shoes are permitted. **NO METAL CLEATS!**
 - e. No slashing is permitted. A player “slashes” when he squares to bunt, draws in the opposing team’s defense, and then swings freely at the batted ball. A player who slashes during a league game will be called out by the umpire and all advancing runners must return to the base they were on before the batted ball was put into play. A second violation by the same player in the same game will result in an ejection.
 - f. The batter, players in the on-deck batting area, and base-runners shall be required to wear protective headgear which gives protection to the top of the head, temples, ears and base of the skull. These items shall be NOCSAE approved.
 - g. Coaches and assistant coaches are required to stay in the dugout or the dugout doorway when their teams are in the field. Failure to comply with this rule will result in the umpire charging the coach with a visit to the mound. A pitcher must be removed after two coach visits to the mound in any inning. Exceptions include calling time out for a legitimate visit to the mound, player injuries, equipment issues and field maintenance.
 - h. Use of facemasks and properly fastened chinstraps on protective headgear is optional.
 - i. Catchers are required to wear proper protective equipment including a mask with throat guard, chest protector, shin guards and NOCSAE approved headgear which gives protection to the top of the head and both ears when catching behind the plate. Any player serving as a catcher to warm up a pitcher shall wear a mask, whether the pitcher is warming up from the mound, in the bullpen or elsewhere.

- j. It is recommended that managers make every effort to encourage the wearing of protective cups by all male players.
- k. **Field Maintenance.** All teams are required to provide coaches and/or parents to maintain baseball fields when requested to do so by the league president. Teams failing to fulfill field maintenance obligations risk having regular season games cancelled. Cancelled games may or may not be rescheduled which may adversely affect playoff seeding. Teams may also, at the discretion of the league president, forfeit practice time for refusing to assist with mandatory field maintenance activities.

3. Sportsmanship

Sportsmanship is very important in Mustang and appropriate behavior by players, coaches and parents is expected at all times. There will be a zero-tolerance rule for any and all unsportsmanlike conduct. All umpires and the league president reserve the right to stop play during regular season and playoff games in the event unsportsmanlike behavior is displayed by players, coaches and parents until order is restored. Players, coaches and/or parents who continue disruptions may be asked to leave the game or practice and the league president reserves the right to call a forfeit of any contest if unsportsmanlike conduct continues. All umpires also have the authority to issue warnings and eject coaches, parents or players for inappropriate behavior.

4. Disciplinary Action

Oak Park Youth Baseball/Softball shall reserve the right to withdraw membership from any league, team, player or adult volunteer whose conduct, on or off the playing field, reflects in a manner that is detrimental to the best interests of Oak Park Youth Baseball/Softball. Players or adult volunteers who engage in unsportsmanlike conduct, such as fighting, abusive language or similarly derogatory activity, may be suspended for one or more games.

- a. Persons subject to such discipline shall have the right to a hearing before the league officers before such discipline is imposed. In the event of such a hearing involving a player, or other person under the age of 18, that person's parents shall be expected to attend.
- b. Persons, youth or adult, who refuse to comply with the Rules of Baseball, PONY Baseball, or the League, may be considered for disciplinary action.
- c. Recognizing the difficulty of establishing specific penalties for a variety of violations of acceptable conduct, the following penalties are suggested. League officers may impose the one which, in their opinion, appears to match the severity of the offense.
 - (1) **Warning.** The offending person is to be advised, in writing, of the offense, and further advised that repetition of the offense shall result in a more severe penalty.
 - (2) **Suspension.** The offending person is to be advised in writing that he or she has been suspended from all league activity for a specific number of games, or days

(3) **Dismissal.** The offending person is to be advised in writing that he or she has been dismissed from the league for the remainder of the current year.

(4) **Barred.** The offending person is to be advised in writing that he or she has been barred from present and future participation in the league, permanently, or for a specific number of years.

5. Teams

Teams shall consist of 12 - 13 players. We will strive for a balance of seven 10-year-olds and six 9-year-olds. Teams will be slotted by the League President of Mustang, or the Vice President of Baseball.

6. Legal Players

Players of league age 9 and 10 born on or between May 1 and April 30.

7. Playing Fields

- a. The fair play area shall be within the first base and third base foul lines and a fence or marked line establishing the outfield limits of the playing area, referred to here as "Home Run Distances." **RECOMMENDED HOME RUN DISTANCES** 175 feet down the left and right field lines(53.34m), 225 feet to center field (68.58m). At Barrie Park, a batted ball shall be considered a home run when it passes the sidewalk by South Taylor Avenue beyond left and left-center fields. At Mann School, the batted ball shall be considered a home run when it reaches the blacktop area beyond right and right-center field. At Stevenson Park, a batted ball shall be considered a homerun when it lands on the railroad tracks beyond right field or the playground beyond left and left-center field.
- b. Home plate, the pitcher's plate and the bases shall be official size as used in regulation baseball.
- c. The third base dugout shall be reserved for the home team.

8. Playing Rules

- a. The official playing rules, with the exceptions and variations contained in **these rules**, shall be "Official Rules of Major League Baseball" completely revised, as released through the office of the Commissioner of Baseball.
- b. No more than three players shall "huddle" on the playing field at any time during the game. Umpires shall discourage such gatherings when they tend to delay the game.
- c. It is recommended that each player on the team play in at least three innings of each game and preferably four innings. Players must play a minimum of two different defensive positions during regular season games. Every player will play both infield and outfield during the regular season. Coaches should make an effort to sit even their most skilled players at least one inning per game.
- d. Players can be removed from playing in the field after the end of an inning and put back into the game at any time.
- e. Continuous Batting Order: All players regardless of whether they are playing in the field shall bat.

- f. Once removed from the lineup a pitcher may return to the lineup but shall not pitch again in the same game.
- g. In any instance in which a team does not have an eligible substitute for a player who becomes ill, is injured, or ejected from the game by the umpire, the player last removed from the lineup by the manager or coach, who is otherwise eligible to play, shall be used as a substitute.
- h. Runners steal bases after the ball has crossed the plate. Runners may only steal one base per pitch. Runners may never steal home.
- i. Overthrows. Hitters and any runners already on base when the ball is put into play shall be awarded 1 base on overthrows. Overthrows occur when the ball in play is thrown beyond the fencing along the first base and third base dugouts and bleachers or into a dugout. The ball shall be considered in play when the fielded ball hits the fencing along the first base and third base dugouts and bleachers or anywhere in the backstop area.
- j. Substitute runners. Teams may use substitute runners if there are 2 outs and the catcher is on base or in the event a base runner is injured. A team's substitute or pinch runner must be the last out in the current inning or the last out in the team's previous at bat if there are no outs and a base runner is injured. **Teams may not substitute runners randomly.** Ex: a team may not substitute their fastest base runner unless that player made the last out and he/she replaces an injured player or the catcher who is on base with 2 outs.
- k. 6-run rule: Each team can score a maximum of 6 runs per inning.

9. Pitching Rules

- a. Pitchers shall not pitch in more than three innings per game. Pitchers shall be allowed to pitch in no more than eight innings in any one calendar week. A calendar week begins on Monday and ends the following Sunday.
- b. Players are on a strict pitch count. Pitchers can throw no more than 55 pitches per game, and no more than 110 pitches per calendar week. Pitch counts reset to zero on Monday of every week.**
- c. Pitchers shall have at least 40 hours rest after pitching three innings on the same calendar day. The 40 hours 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.
- d. As soon as a pitcher delivers one pitch to a batter the pitcher shall be considered as having pitched in one inning. A pitcher is charged with the number of innings pitched in the specific calendar day and week in which they pitched, regardless of whether they are local league games, the playoff of postponed games or suspended games, tie games or exhibition games, or All-Star games.
- e. During a game, both teams must count their team's pitches as well as the other team's. Pitch counts must be e-mailed to the league president at the end of the week.**
- f. Pitchers may only throw fastballs and changeups. No breaking balls are allowed.
- g. Pitchers who throw breaking balls will be warned by the umpire. The team head coach will also be warned. If the pitcher throws a second breaking ball, the umpire shall eject both the pitcher and the head coach from the game. The league will then be

notified and disciplinary action as specified in Section 2 of the Mustang Rulebook shall be enforced by the league.

- h. 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.
- i. Pitchers may not wear white long-sleeved shirts under their uniforms. The opposing head coach and/or umpire may call timeout and request the player remove the white long-sleeved shirt prior to throwing his or her next pitch.
- j. If a relief pitcher comes in “cold” the umpire shall allow the pitcher to warm up properly with at least ten warm-up pitches.
- k. Pitchers in violation of any of the pitching rules shall be considered ineligible players.
- l. 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 from pitching.
- m. A pitcher shall be removed from a game if he hits 3 batters in an inning with the pitched ball or 4 batters during the course of a game. The pitcher may not return to pitch in the same game. If the pitcher is pulled for hitting batters, the defensive team is allowed time to warm up a cold pitcher, typically 10 pitches thrown to the catcher, before play resumes.
- n. Any player who expresses an interest in pitching will be given the opportunity to try the position during the regular season.

12. Length of Games

- a. Regulation games shall be: six (6) innings.
- b. When a game is tied at the end of regulation length, it shall go into extra innings until decision is reached or the game is called by the umpire.
- c. If a game is called for any reason, it shall be a complete game if four innings have been completed, or if the home team has scored more runs in three or three and a fraction innings, than the visiting team has scored in four completed innings.
- d. If a game is called when it is tied, it shall be considered a suspended game and shall be resumed from the point of curtailment at the time scheduled by league officials.
- e. If a game is called for any reason in an uncompleted inning, after having reached complete-game length and the visiting team ties the score or takes the lead in the uncompleted inning, and the home team does not tie the score or retake the lead in its portion of the uncompleted inning, the game shall be considered a suspended game and shall be continued from the point of curtailment at the time scheduled by league officials.
- f. 10-Run Rule: If a team is leading an opponent by at least 10 runs after four or more complete innings have been played or after four and one half innings if the home team shall have a 10 run lead at the end of its fourth inning, or before the completion of its fifth inning, the game shall be terminated and the team in the lead shall be declared the winner.

13. Schedule

- a. Scheduling and rescheduling of league games shall be the responsibility of

the officers and executive committee, and shall provide not less than 12 regular season games for each team.

14. Umpires

Assignment of umpires shall be the responsibility of the league officers. At any time the umpires assigned by the league fail to report, or are otherwise unavailable, any other umpires used in that game shall be agreed upon by the opposing managers, preferably in writing.

15. Scorekeepers

The official scorer should notify the manager concerned if an ineligible player or an improper batter is about to be used in the game, but the failure of the scorer to do so has no effect upon the rules.

16. Sponsors

- a. Teams or leagues shall be sponsored only by those organizations, firms or companies whose activities or products are not detrimental to the welfare of youth.
- b. Specifically, no firm or company whose advertising reflects the sale of alcoholic beverages or tobacco products shall be permitted to sponsor the program or be permitted to display any form of such advertising in connection with the program.

17. Managers and Coaches

- a. Adult coaches should be the first and third base coaches.
- b. A coach or coaches shall not switch coaching boxes during an inning.
- c. Players, managers and coaches shall remain in the dugouts, on the benches or in the prescribed areas throughout the game.
- d. If a manager or coach leaves the dugout and goes onto the playing field to talk to a pitcher or any player or players more than once in a half inning, a pitching change shall be made. The only exceptions to this rule shall be in case of injury, or if time is called by the opposing team or by an umpire.
- e. Umpires shall not permit more than one offensive time out in each inning to allow a manager or coach to talk with a batter.

18. Forfeiting Games

- a. Teams failing to field at least eight uniformed players within 15 minutes after scheduled starting time of a game, or at any time during the game, shall forfeit the game.
- b. Penalty for use of illegal players shall be forfeiture of games in which illegal players participated, provided such games are protested by any of the league managers or officers in writing within 48 hours of the game or games in question.
- c. Penalty for use of an ineligible player, upon appeal by the opposing manager or notification by the official scorer or league officers, when the official scorebook or other league records verify the ineligibility of the player concerned, shall be immediate removal of the player from the lineup and ejection

of the team manager from the game. Both the player and the manager shall be ineligible to participate in the next scheduled game played by the team.

- d. An ineligible player is one who is legally a member of the league, but who is ineligible to play or to pitch in a particular game or games because of the limitations set forth in these Rules and Regulations, or as the result of a previous rules violation or disciplinary action.
- e. For purposes of interpreting this rule, a player shall not be considered in violation of the rules until at least one pitch has been thrown to the batter after the point of violation.
- f. In the event the manager of an ineligible player refuses to remove the player from the lineup and the manager does not leave the field when the appeal is made, and verified, the game is subject to forfeit.
- g. When the ineligible status of a player is not established until after completion of the game, the game shall stand as played, but the player and manager shall be ineligible to participate in the next game played by the team, or the next game played after the ineligible status has been determined.

19. Illegal equipment

- a. Players are not permitted to use illegal headgear even if no other headgear is available. When proper headgear is not available, the game shall be delayed until the equipment can be obtained, or postponed and rescheduled by the league officers.
- b. Penalty for use of illegal shoes shall be removal of the shoes from the game, and, if no other legal footwear is available, removal of the affected player or players from the lineup.
- c. Players who do not wear complete conventional uniforms, protective headgear and catching equipment as required by these rules, shall be removed from the lineup.
- d. Players who intentionally, in the judgement of the umpire, throw bats or protective headgear, or discard protective headgear while batting or running the bases, shall be ejected from the game following completion of any play in progress at the time the violation occurs. Such action does not constitute an out and such players shall be replaced as batters or base runners if appropriate.
- e. Pitchers in violation of any of the pitching rules shall be considered ineligible players, subject to the penalties stated for use of an ineligible player in this rule.

20. Protests

- a. A protest based on a play which involves an umpire's judgment shall not be permitted.
- b. When protests are based on an interpretation of the rules, the objecting manager shall, at the time the play occurs, notify the head umpire, the opposing manager and official scorer that the game is being played under protest, and submit the protest in writing to the league president or secretary,

- or to the Decisions Committee, within 48 hours of the completion of the game.
- c. When protests based on the interpretation of a rule are upheld by the Decisions Committee, the game concerned shall be replayed from the point of protest.
 - d. Umpires should make a public announcement to the crowd when a game is being played under protest.
 - e. Any team manager or other adult leader who withdraws a team from the playing field under any circumstances prior to the official completion of the game shall forfeit all rights to protests as prescribed in this section.

EXCLUSIVE PLAY POLICY

The following policy was adopted by the Board of Directors of Oak Park Youth Baseball/Softball (OPYB/S) on February 12, 2002:

Effective immediately, no player registered in the Boys Junior Bronco, Mustang (Hardball and RIF), Bronco or Shetland leagues of Oak Park Youth Baseball/Softball shall be permitted to be on the roster of, or participate on a regular basis with, any baseball team or baseball organization not affiliated with or sanctioned by Oak Park Youth Baseball/Softball. This restriction shall apply during the period beginning on the date of Junior Bronco/Mustang and Bronco/Shetland tryouts and ending on the date the player's house league or tournament team concludes the season.

Intpretation and enforcement of the policy shall be determined jointly by the President and Vice-President (Boys' Baseball) of OPYB/S, along with the League President of Junior Bronco, Mustang, Bronco or Shetland League, as applicable. Penalties for violation may include, but shall not be limited to, suspension or expulsion from OPYB/S activities for the applicable season and forfeiture of games.

22. Travel League Tryouts

Travel tryouts for 9 and 10-year-old teams will be held in the spring. Travel teams will be set prior to Memorial Day.