

# Blossom Valley PONY Baseball



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*Protect Our Nation's Youth*



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1) How is Blossom Valley PONY Baseball different from Little League Baseball?

The primary features that distinguish **Blossom Valley PONY Baseball** from Little League Baseball are the use of a two-year age bracket system and scaled diamonds. In organizations such as Little League players can differ by as much as three years within a division. As a result, the younger players because of their lack of maturity, ability, and size find it hard to communicate with the older players. Generally they find themselves spending a disproportionate amount of time on the bench and may feel disconnected from their team. With players of only two ages involved, as is the case with **Blossom Valley PONY Baseball**, it is far easier to permit every player to play more positions since the skill levels within the age group is not that wide. The game of baseball cannot be played if the physical capability of the players does not match the physical achievements required for the game. Little League uses two diamond sizes. Up until age 12 players play on a 60-foot diamond, then they jump to 90-foot. **Blossom Valley PONY Baseball**, on the other hand, scales the size of their diamonds to match the physical capabilities of the players within each division.

The base dimensions for **Blossom Valley PONY Baseball** are:

- 50-foot bases for **Shetland** (5-6 year olds) and **Pinto** (7-8 year-olds)
- 60-foot bases for **Mustang** (9-10 year-olds)
- 70-foot bases for **Bronco** (11-12 year-olds)
- 80-foot bases for **Pony** (13-14 year-olds)
- 90-foot bases for **Colt/Palomino** (15-18 year-olds)

These base dimensions are the result of extensive experimentation to determine the size on which players of each age group can properly play the game of baseball. Pitching distance is also scaled to the ability of the player in proportion to the size of the diamond. The scaled down diamonds allow the players to make 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, difficult for adults and nearly impossible for youngsters on a full size diamond, become a probability rather than an impossibility.

### 2) What are the league geographical boundaries?

Each legal player residing within the approved league boundaries shall be given an opportunity to become a player candidate for the league. A boundary map can be found on the web site at [www.bvponybaseball.com/maps.htm](http://www.bvponybaseball.com/maps.htm). If you have specific questions in regards to the boundary map please e-mail our player agent at [playeragent@bvponybaseball.com](mailto:playeragent@bvponybaseball.com)

### 3) Where are the games played?

**Blossom Valley PONY** uses three sites to accommodate the seven divisions within the league. The Shetland division plays at Blossom Valley Elementary School and Calero Field. The Pinto division plays at Calero field. The Mustang division plays at Calero field and Herman Middle School. Bronco and Pony play at Herman Middle School. The Pony division may play at other local schools depending on division size. The Colt division plays at various schools in and around Northern California. Maps to these fields can be found on the web site at [www.bvponybaseball.com/maps.htm](http://www.bvponybaseball.com/maps.htm).

### 4) When are the games played?

The Pinto through Pony divisions have two games per week during the regular season, one weekday game and one Saturday game. It is recommended that players arrive at the field one hour prior to game time so

managers can warm them up and get the line up cards ready prior to the start of the game. The Shetland division only plays games on Saturdays except for make-up games.

#### 5) **How often, and where, will my child practice?**

Practice schedules shall be determined by the Division Directors, with the approval of the Board of Directors, and shall be limited as follows:

**Shetland**--Practice sessions shall be limited to two (2) hours maximum per session. Practice sessions shall be limited to one per week.

**Pinto/Mustang**--Practice sessions shall be limited to two (2) hours maximum per session. Any combination of practice sessions and games shall be limited to three (3) per week (i.e., 2 games and 1 practice, 1 game and 2 practices, etc.).

**Bronco/Pony**--Practice sessions shall be limited to two and one half (2 ½) hour maximum per sessions. Any combination of games and practices shall be limited to four (4) per week (i.e., 3 games and 1 practice, 2 games and 2 practices).

**Colt/Palomino**--The manager shall determine the practice schedule for each team.

**Additional Practices**-- Managers may schedule additional practices (i.e., batting cages, position practices, etc.) on a voluntary basis only. Players cannot be disciplined for failing to attend voluntary practice sessions, which exceed the previously identified limits.

BVPB receives school practice field assignments from the local school districts. You will know which field you practice on once your child is placed on a team and your manager contacts you. Shetland age players will practice twice a week until the season starts and go to once per week after that.

#### 6) **When will the practices begin?**

Depending on weather and forming of teams, practicing should begin in late February/early March.

#### 7) **When will the season begin?**

Practices begin at the end of February and games begin at the end of March.

#### 8) **How long will the season last?**

The season usually lasts about 11-12 weeks and is extended for those players that are on the tournament teams. If there are rained out games, we try to schedule Fridays and Sundays for make up games.

#### 9) **What equipment will my child need before the first practice or game?**

Blossom Valley PONY will issue a jersey, cap and baseball pants to each child for use during league games. A uniform consists of a pair of "White" baseball pants, belt, a baseball jersey, a hat, and a pair of all-in-one baseball socks. The jersey, hat and pants are the player's to keep.

The pants have belt loops and the jerseys don't provide much warmth, so it would be a good idea to purchase a long sleeve baseball shirt to match the color of your child's team. Your manager will provide more specifics as for the color.

Rubber cleats are recommended for all and **Blossom Valley PONY** does not allow metal cleats in the Shetland through Bronco divisions. Last, but not least, a quality leather glove is a must. Vinyl and simulated leather gloves may be cheaper, but tend to cause the player a great deal of frustration. It's impossible to form a pocket in gloves made of vinyl or simulated leather. Therefore the ball tends to pop out when the player attempts to catch it. All players are advised to bring a windbreaker, jacket or sweatshirt to every game and practice. Please consult with your coach in regards to the choice of baseball bat before purchase

**10) Who do I call if I have a problem that needs to be resolved by the league?**

If at any time you have a problem or just want information you may call **(408) 225-4862** or better yet send an e-mail to [webmaster@bvponybaseball.com](mailto:webmaster@bvponybaseball.com) or go to <http://www.bvponybaseball.com/board.htm> and e-mail a board member directly. We would like for you to first discuss any concerns with your child's manager, then with the Level Director (who is a Board Coordinator assigned to oversee that Division). Please provide us with both a day and evening phone number. In most cases we'll get back to you within 24 hours, unless the message states otherwise. You are also welcome to attend a board meeting and express your concerns directly to the board. The Board meeting schedule will be posted on the website calendar. We typically meet on the first and third Thursday of the month in the evening.

**11). Can my child be placed on a team with one of his friends?**

In the Shetland division or in the case of sibling cases, YES. While we try to discourage such requests we do our best to try to accommodate them whenever possible. All players are placed on teams by way of a player draft to try to balance the skill level of each team. It makes the draft extremely cumbersome if there are too many of these situations. Brother/sister option—Although not obligated, it is BVPB's practice to honor requests of parents that brothers and sisters be assigned to the same team. Such requests must be directed to the Player Agent prior to the draft. **Players who fail to attend the tryout may lose their right to the brother/sister option.**

**12). Who is responsible for staffing the Snack Shacks?**

Every BVPB parent will be responsible for working 1-2 shifts per season at our snack shacks during the season.

**13). Do I have to participate in the fund-raisers?**

Yes. It cost about \$250 per player to run our league and the only way we can keep our registration fees Low is to have fund-raisers.

**14). What is Opening Day?**

Opening Day is a celebration of our players and our new season. We celebrate our new season with the "parade of players" and the accomplishments of our league & players from the previous season with our "All-Star" introduction. The day is filled with Raffles, Fun, Food & the ever-popular team and individual pictures.

**15). If my child is unhappy with the team he/she has been placed on, can he/she switch teams?**

Only in **extreme** cases do we allow children to switch teams after the teams have been formed. Such requests must be made in writing to the **Blossom Valley PONY Baseball** Board of Directors and be approved. Parents must submit, in writing, to the Player Agent, any reasons they do not want their child to play for a certain manager/coach. **This must be done by the end of tryouts (evaluation session).** Requests will be limited to two (2) per season, with the exception of the Pony Division, which will be limited to one (1) per season. All players who are affected will be handled on an individual basis and all requests will be kept confidential. Managers will be notified within 24 hours of any player they will not be able to draft.

**16). If my child decided to quit can I get a refund?**

Registration fees are non-refundable after the player's evaluation(s) session.

**17). What are 'freezes'?**

In the player draft the Manager's child and the child of his coach are frozen and cannot be drafted by another Manager.

**18). When and what is a player evaluation session?**

With the exception of "freezes" and the previous season's All-Star players all (Pinto-Pony) league players must attend an evaluation session to be drafted onto a team. These sessions typically last about 1.5 to 2 hours. The evaluation gives the managers within the league an opportunity to evaluate each player prior to the draft. All players are placed on teams. Please check the calendar for league evaluations. Shetland division players do not attend evaluation sessions. They will be assigned to a team.

19). **If my child does poorly or misses at the player evaluation session will he/she be cut?**

No. All players will be drafted.

20). **Can I keep my child down in a lower division, or bring them up a division a year early?**

No. The rules of the PONY organization dictate that each division has only players of the specific age group play in that division.

21). **When will I find out what team my child will play on?**

All teams should be formed by the middle of February. Your child's manager should notify you of the first team meeting shortly after the draft. You can check the team rosters on the website or call our league telephone at **(408) 225-4862**.

22). **My child has never played baseball before. If he's not as good as the other kids, will he have a chance to play?**

Every child on every team will play a minimum number of innings each game. PONY rule and BV by-laws strictly enforce minimum playing time. Please refer to the BVPB rules **7.G** at

<http://bvponybaseball.com/rules.htm>

23). **Are there Time Limits on games?**

Yes, Shetland (2 hours). Pinto - Pony level (no new inning will begin after 2 hours of play if a game is scheduled on the field currently in use).

24). **How many Managers/Coaches can a team have?**

No more than three.

25). **Are there any Local Rules that are strictly enforced?**

Official baseball rules: All play will be governed by the "Official Baseball Rules—The Sporting News Addition" by Pony Baseball, Inc.'s "Rules and Regulations". In addition, BVPB has adopted league rules.

**For more detailed information please see the BVPB website** <http://bvponybaseball.com/rules.htm>

26). **Can girls sign up?**

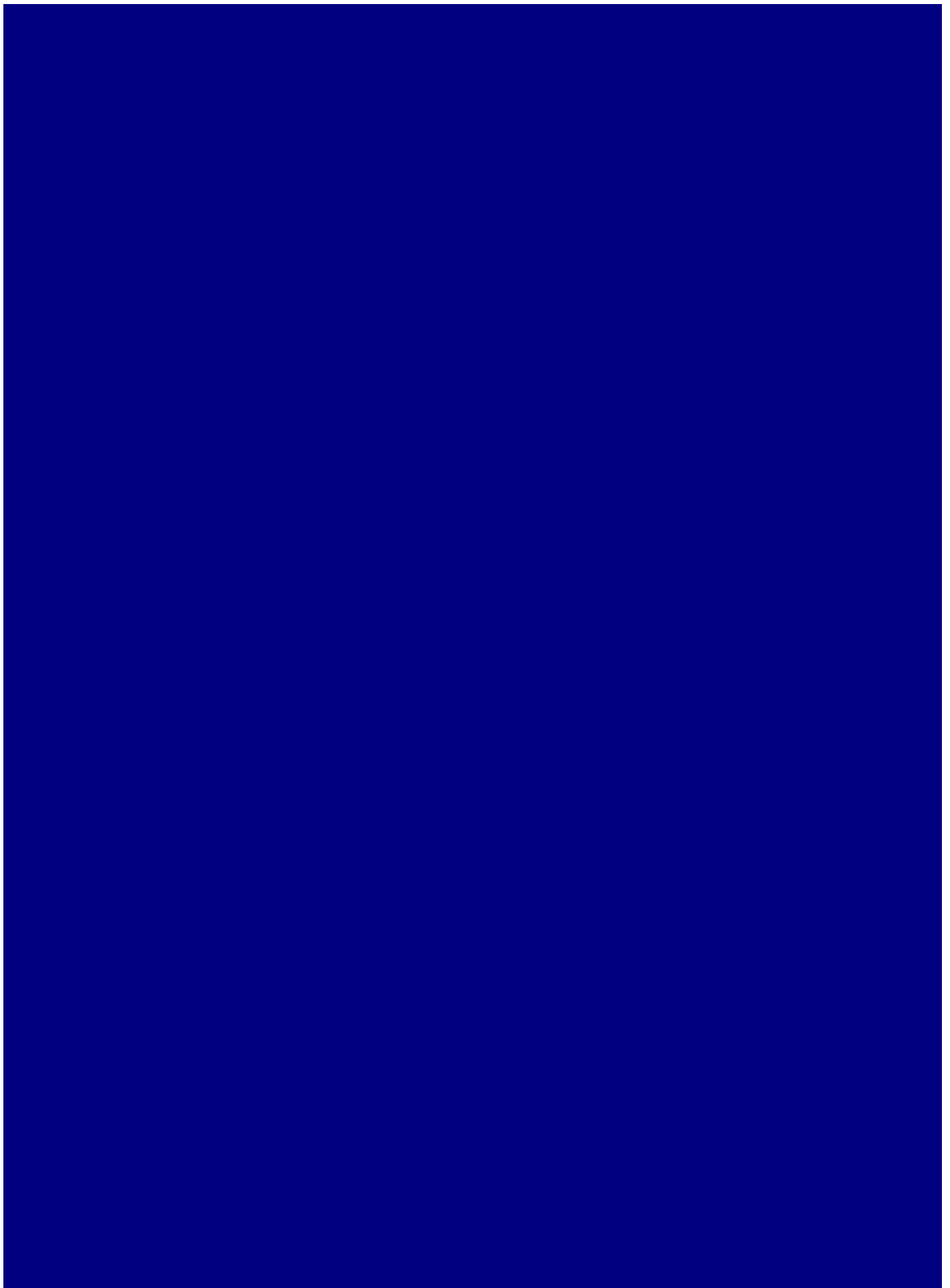
Many girls play baseball in BV! They are evaluated and selected, just like everyone else

27). **Who umpires PONY games?**

**Blossom Valley PONY** hires only "trained umpires". Pinto\Mustang levels require a "trained plate umpire" (age 13-18) and Bronco Two trained (plate & base) are used. Two professional adult umpires (one behind the plate and one on the bases) at all Pony/Colt games.



# PONY Baseball



# Why Play PONY Baseball? Let's Compare!

PONY	LITTLE LEAGUE
<b>Age Groups</b>	
<p>Two-year increments; Shetland (5-6), Pinto (7-8), Mustang (9-10), Bronco (11-12), Pony (13-14), Colt 16U, Palomino 19U). This allows players to take an older leadership role every two years. Because we are a large league, we have enough "in house" teams to host all games at "our" fields. No travelling to another league to play, unless a team decides to do so.</p>	<p>Nationally only Minors and Majors – 9 year olds could play with 12 year olds.</p>
<b>Field Size</b>	
<p>Field size changes every two years. Shetland (5-6 years old) and Pinto (7-8) play on 50' bases, Mustang (9-10) play on 60' bases with pitching from 44'; Bronco (11-12) play on 70' bases with pitching from 48'; Pony (13-14) plays on 80' bases with pitching from 54'; Colt (15-16) plays on full size field as players develop to "full size".</p>	<p>Players 7-12 years old play on 60' bases and pitch from 46' and at 13 jump to 90' bases, (although some local leagues have followed Pony examples and created an 80' base Junior division they still have 90' bases in all national tournaments). 46' pitching and 60' bases are just too small for 12 year olds!</p>
<b>Rules</b>	
<p>Pony plays full baseball rules from age 9 &amp; up – the same as high school and major leagues. Shetland gets to hit coach pitching! Pinto players see "live" pitching from other players!</p>	<p>Little League plays a mix between Baseball and Softball until age 13.</p>
<b>Base Running</b>	
<p>Starting with Mustang (9-10) age appropriate field size allows leading off and stealing, sliding (taught in the Pinto Division (7-8) with the use of safety bases), and running on dropped third strikes. PONY players learn to read the pitcher on steals. The player, as a base stealer, becomes a threat and has a far greater chance to contribute to the team. This also means high school managers only need to review fundamentals, not introduce them.</p>	<p>No leading off; runners must remain on the base until the pitch crosses the plate; no running on a dropped third strike. Stealing is mainly advancing on a passed ball. Not permitting players to lead off and steal means they are only playing, being taught and learning <i>part</i> of the game.</p> <p>Base stealing, even the threat of base stealing, is a <i>major part</i> of baseball. Must have a player? in one coach's box.</p>
<b>Pitching</b>	
<p>Because of lead offs, pitchers learn to pitch from a stretch, pick off moves to bases and the art of the "balk". Fielders learn to cover the bag, back up throws from catchers and learn the complete game including "back door" throws. The field size variation allows plays to be made from age 5 &amp; up.</p>	<p>Pitchers do not have to pitch from a stretch. Without runners leading off, balks are irrelevant. Strong pitchers who do not have to hold runners and pitch from a stretch are overpowering. Players who pitch merely become "<i>throwers</i>"</p>