

First Level Tournaments F.A.Q.

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All Tournament Are Important

The game or games you will host are as important as any played at any other level. The eventual World Series Champion may well be one the teams beginning tournament play at your Area or District Tournament. No tournament is unimportant to the players; therefore, all games should be played under favorable conditions.

Organize

It is advisable to have at least one organizational meeting to determine the duties and responsibilities for those involved in hosting the tournament or tournament games. Even if you avoid titles, have a meeting and decide who will be responsible for the various items and duties that are a part of any tournament contest. Elect a Tournament Chairperson so that one person will be in charge. This individual will serve as a focal point for exchange of information and will answer questions. If charging admission, decide who will collect the money. If you are having a raffle or a drawing, decide who will be in charge. Determine who will contact and pay the umpires. If you plan any ceremonies, decide who will introduce the players, say a prayer or raise the flag. Set the time when the birth certificates will be checked. Decide who will keep score and make sure there are plenty of Official PONY stamped baseballs or softballs available.

You may also need a Treasurer. If not, be sure your league treasurer or some other person is designated to receive and deposit any money involved. Make sure these individuals keep accurate record of receipts and expenditures.

Someone must make sure that the playing field is ready. We suggest electing a Facilities or Field Chairperson to assume that responsibility.

If you plan to have your concession stand operating, you will need to be sure the person who is normally in charge will be available. This individual will need to make sure that the concession stand is sufficiently stocked.

The Tournament Director

A Field Director is responsible for your tournament and will serve as the Tournament Director for your games. As a representative of PONY Baseball and Softball, the Tournament Director acts as a liaison between PONY Baseball and Softball and the Host Community. It is the Tournament Director's responsibility to insure that the games are conducted within the rules and regulations of PONY Baseball and Softball. The Tournament Director establishes the pairings and playing bracket for the scheduling of games, and reschedules games in the event of rain.

The Tournament Director has the right to approve selection of umpires. The Tournament Director selects individuals to serve on the Decisions Committee and is responsible for approval of ground rules for your field. The Tournament Director also needs to insure that each participating manager is aware of the rules.

In the event of inclement weather, the Tournament Director determines whether a game will be played as scheduled. Once the game is started, however, the umpire will make this decision.

In the event of postponement, the Tournament Director in consultation with the Tournament Chairperson determines the revised playing schedule. Postponed games must be made up in the order that the games were scheduled.

The Tournament Chairperson

The Tournament Chairperson heads the Host Committee and is responsible for all phases of the tournament, except for the actual playing of the game. Close cooperation and communication between the Tournament Director and the Tournament Chairperson is a must. A meeting, or at least a telephone conversation between the Director and the Chairperson, well in advance of the playing dates, is a necessity if the games are to be played smoothly. In most instances, accidents do not happen. More often they are the result of improper planning and even more, the lack of any planning. The Tournament Director may ask the Tournament Chairperson to make arrangements with the umpires to work the games. The Tournament Director may also ask the Tournament Chairperson for suggestions for people to serve on the Decisions Committee.

The Tournament Director may be able to offer advice and suggestions to the Tournament Chairperson in the various areas of the Chairperson's responsibility, such as pre-game introduction and ceremonies.

If you are not certain who will serve as Tournament Director at your tournament, contact your local Field Director to find out if they intend to also serve as Tournament Director. If not, make sure this individual has made arrangements for someone else to serve as the Tournament Director.

If It Rains

When teams are at the field the Tournament Director, before the game starts, determines if the game is to be postponed because of rain.

Generally, postponing a tournament game too far in advance is a bit risky. However, when rain early in the day, or several hours before game time, has made it quite apparent the game cannot be played, it is advisable to have some arrangement with the Tournament Director will be close enough to visit the facility and make the judgment. If not, it should be agreed the Tournament Chairperson will make the decision after consulting with the Tournament Director.

If an early decision is made, someone will need to contact the participating teams, the umpires, the news media, workers and fans. It is best to have one person designated to contact the team managers, in order to insure the authenticity of the call.

Remember, postponement affects pitching eligibility. When there is any doubt, it is far better to wait until game time to make the final decision about postponing any game.

Decisions Committee

The Decisions Committee will rule on all game protests, at the point of protest. The Decisions Committee should be composed of three people who are familiar with the rules and regulations of PONY Baseball and Softball and have some knowledge of the Rules (Baseball – PONY Baseball Rulebook and Official Rules of Major League Baseball, Softball – PONY Girls Softball Rulebook). In most instances the Tournament Director will serve as a member of the Decisions Committee.

Be sure your umpires understand the importance of the Decisions Committee, and realize that their decisions are final and the game plays on.

It is advisable to set aside a special seating area for the Decisions Committee where managers and umpires can reach them for questions or consultation.

Members of the Decisions Committee should be selected and notified in advance of the game, rather than attempting to pick people out of the stands just before game time. Quite often, knowledgeable people, who might otherwise not be in attendance at the game, will serve on the Decisions Committee if contacted in advance.

Serving On The Decisions Committee

Basically, the task of the Decisions Committee is a passive one. You will need to act only when an actual protest is brought to you. The game is the responsibility of the umpires. Other game and tournament conditions are the responsibility of the Tournament Director and Tournament Chairperson.

Your authority as a Decision Committee member exists only for the specific game you are asked to work. Rulings which affect eligibility of players, managers and coaches for future tournament games will be made by the Tournament Director, who will consult when necessary, with the proper PONY Baseball and Softball Field Directors.

Realize that in tournament play, your decision on any protest is final. There is no further appeal. Due to the limited time available, it is not possible to replay any portion of a tournament game. Because we cannot guarantee that appeals from a Decisions Committee ruling will always be accepted, we do not accept appeals at any level.

While the final decision should be made by your committee, you may request information from the umpires and managers or other knowledgeable sources. Do not hesitate to ask an umpire to identify the rule on which a call was made, the protesting manager to cite the rule which has allegedly been violated.

When you do not know, do not guess. If necessary, delay the game and attempt to locate a PONY Baseball and Softball Field Director to help you with the interpretation of the rule.

Your task is relatively simple: to see that protests are settled on the basis of the rules. Hopefully, all you will have to do is enjoy the game.

Birth Documents – Eligibility Affidavits

The Tournament Director may ask for someone on the Host Committee to assist with verification of players' birth documents, Tournament Team Eligibility Affidavits, medical release forms, and insurance information. Generally this should be done no less than one hour before game time.

Review Of These Documents At The First Level Of Tournament Play Is More Important Than At Any Other Level

If a player is to be declared ineligible for tournament play on the basis of improper age, illegible birth documents, residence or lack of participation in the league the team represents, it is far better that this action be taken at the first level of play than at any later date. Review the documents carefully. Do not assume that a thorough check is not important.

Publicity – Team Contacts

Even though you may not be interested in a major publicity campaign for your tournament, advise local newspapers and radio and television outlets of your tournament dates and times. Determine what type of results the media are interested in using and assign someone to see that the information is provided to them.

When you know which team or teams will be playing in your tournament, obtain the name, address and telephone numbers of the team manager and business manager. The Tournament Director or Tournament Chairperson must contact these people to advise them of game times, the time of the pre-tournament meeting and similar information.

Official Pony Baseball And Softball Prayers – Prayer For A Game

Almighty God, help us to realize, We are gathered here to watch young people play Baseball and Softball. Not to second guess strategy, dispute decisions or question ability. That we are here to cheer, to encourage, joining in the fun that is Baseball and Softball. Not to jeer, discourage or otherwise degrade the game. That while officials and players are

expected to perform within the bounds of certain standards, we also as spectators are expected to conduct ourselves within the bounds of good sportsmanship. May this contest end without injury, without feelings of ill-will, without disgrace... but as an activity worthy of Thy blessing. Amen

Official Pony Baseball And Softball Prayers – Closing Prayer

Almighty God, we pause today to express our thanks to you for the opportunity we had to play Baseball and Softball together this season. Not all of us won championships, but we were all winners because of the opportunity we had to develop our skills, to meet new friends, to enjoy new experiences and to learn to cope with the joy of victory and the sting of defeat. We have learned to work together toward a common goal, to consider what is best for the team as well as our personal desires. We recognize that intense competition with as opponent on the ball field does not prohibit cherished friendships with those same opponents when the game is over. We can admire ability and appreciate skill in an opponent, and still do our best to defeat them on the field of play. We are all children of your world, Lord, and it is our prayer that the lessons we have learned in the great game of Baseball and Softball will help us make that world a better place in which to live. Amen

CHECKLIST

No matter what form your tournament committee takes, whether it involves three people or ten people, here are a number of items for which someone must take responsibility. You may think of other items not included here. Regardless of the manner, before the tournament begins, decide everyone's responsibilities. In the event of unexpected emergencies at home or at work, be sure to have several people to fill in when needed.

The Tournament Chairperson should contact the Tournament Director before your tournament starts. Talk over your plans. Ask for suggestions, so the two of you can work as a team.

• BASICS

- PONY Registered Umpires: Who makes arrangements?
- Decisions Committee: Are people needed?
- Pre-Tournament Meeting: When? Where?
- Obtain list of contacts for teams.
- Opening Game Ceremonies: Pre-game ceremonies and/or player introductions, National Anthem, opening or pre-game prayer?
- Seating area for Decisions Committee – Where?
- Advise teams - Arrival time, pre-tournament meeting time and game schedule
- Pre-Tournament Meeting (Tournament Director directs)
- Rain: Who postpones? At what time? Who notifies the umpires, teams, press and workers?
- ATTENDING: Tournament Chairperson, Umpire Representative, Team Managers, Business Managers, and Committee Chairperson.
- CHECK: Birth Documents, Eligibility Affidavits, Medical Release Forms, and Insurance Certificates.
- REVIEW: Ground Rules, PONY Baseball and Softball rules and Official rules.
- DISCUSS: Home and Visitor dugouts, infield practice, team introductions and special ceremonies.
- IDENTIFY: Decision Committee location and explain how a team is to protest
- CONDUCT: Expected of teams, managers and coaches.

• PLAYING FIELD

- Ground Crew
- Field Preparation
- Line marking material
- Bases

- Official PONY baseballs and softballs
- Rosin Bags
- Ball retrievers
- Sand or other drying material
- Medical assistance
 - Doctor/Nurse/Trainer
 - Ambulance
 - First aid kit
- Crowd Control – Police
- Toilets - clean?

- **ADMISSIONS**

- Tickets
- Ticket sellers
- Raffle
- Collections

- **TREASURER**

- Change
 - For ticket sales
 - For concession stand
- Deposit receipts
- Pay umpires

- **PUBLICITY - PRESS BOX**

- Notify media
 - Game dates
 - Time
 - Place
 - Provide game results
- Scorekeeper
- Scorebook and pencils
- Scoreboard operator
- Online Scoring
- Public address system
- Announcer
- National anthem - record or tape available
- American flag
- Pre-game prayer
- Pre-game player introductions

- **CONCESSIONS**

- Workers
- Stock
- Change
- Ice

- **ADDITIONAL ITEMS**