

# Irvine PONY Baseball

## Frequently asked questions

### **MiteBall**

#### **What age is my child eligible to play in the Miteball division?**

Your child is eligible to play Miteball if he/she is 3 or 4 and does not turn 5 before April 30, 2009.

#### **How many games will there be each week?**

There is one game on Saturdays.

#### **Where are the games played?**

Harvard Park

#### **What times are the games at?**

They are usually scheduled to start between 8:00 the earliest and noon the latest.

#### **How many practices will they have each week?**

Miteball guidelines allow for 1 optional practice each week during the season.

#### **When & where are the practices?**

This will vary by team and coach.

#### **Can my child be on a team that only practices on a particular day of the week?**

No. It would be nearly impossible to fulfill this type of request.

#### **Can my child play with a specific coach or friend?**

You can make a request for a specific coach and/or friends in the comment section on the registration form. We make every effort to accommodate these requests.

### **T-Ball**

#### **What age is my child eligible to play in the T-ball division?**

Your child is eligible for T-Ball if he is 5 years old and does not turn 6 before April 30, 2009. If your child's birth date falls between May 1, 2003 and April 30, 2004 they would play T-Ball.

#### **Can my child play with a specific coach or friend?**

You can make a request for a specific coach and/or friends in the comment section on the registration form. We make every effort to accommodate these requests, keeping in mind the balance of all teams.

#### **Can my child play up from T-Ball to Coach Pitch; he is a really good baseball player?**

It is generally our policy to require players to play within the division that their age mandates. We do this to keep the teams balanced based on age, maturity, ability and safety of our players. We can look at requests on a case by case basis.

Will there be any coach pitch opportunities in T-Ball? Coach Pitch is allowed in the last 2 innings of a game.

### **Can I pick the “team name” my child will play for?**

No, team names are selected by coach seniority.

### **How many practices and games are there in a season?**

The first part of the season there are 2 practices a week and 1 game on Saturdays. After April 1<sup>st</sup> we drop to 1 practice a week with 1 mid week game and 1 Saturday game.

Is there All Stars for T-Ball?

Yes, All Stars for T-Ball is for fun. We offer one game in our Memorial Day Tournament. All players receive a participation medal. Coaches nominate players based on skill.

### **How is T-Ball different from Mite-Ball?**

The most noticeable difference is no parents on the field. Coaches are limited to a 1<sup>st</sup> base, 3<sup>rd</sup> base and Home base coach. We also play 3 outs or 5 runs which ever comes first. More rules can be found on our website under the T-Ball tab.

### **Can my child be placed on a team that practices on specific days of the week?**

Unfortunately no, practice times/days are determined by the coaches and their availability.

Generally, coaches will ask parents what days/times work best for them. They will make every attempt to accommodate everyone's time/day needs.

### **Who will be child's coach?**

Coaches are parents who volunteer to coach a team for the season. It is usually a parent of a player on the team. Coaches are trained and screened by Irvine PONY. Players are placed on teams made by the commissioner of the division. Commissioners consider requests, schools attended and home locations when placing teams. Team are not finalized until the beginning of February,

## **Shetland**

### **What age is my child eligible to play in the Shetland division?**

Your child is eligible for Shetland if he is 5 or 6 years of age and does not turn 7 before April 30, 2009.

### **Can my child play with a specific coach or friend?**

You can make a request for a specific coach and/or friends in the comment section on the registration form. We make very effort to accommodate these requests, keeping in mind the balance of all teams.

### **Can my child play up from T-Ball to Coach Pitch; he is a really good baseball player?**

It is generally our policy to require players to play within the division that their age mandates. We do this to keep the teams balanced based on age, maturity, ability and safety of our players. We can look at requests on a case by case basis.

Will there be any coach pitch opportunities in T-Ball? Coach Pitch is allowed in the last 2 innings of a game.

### **Can I pick the “team name” my child will play for?**

No, team names are assigned to each team.

### **How many practices and games are there in a season?**

The first part of the season there are 2 practices a week and 1 game on Saturdays. After April 1<sup>st</sup> we drop to 1 practice a week with 1 mid week game and 1 Saturday game.

Is there All Stars for T-Ball?

Yes, All Stars for T-Ball is for fun. We offer one game in our Memorial Day Tournament. All players receive a participation medal. Coaches nominate players based on skill.

### **How is Shetland different from T-Ball?**

The most noticeable difference is no parents on the field. Coaches are limited to a 1<sup>st</sup> base, 3<sup>rd</sup> base and Home base coach. We also play 3 outs or 5 runs which ever comes first. The differences include unlimited base running, scorekeeping, consistent coach pitching, win/ loss records, double elimination playoff bracket, etc... More rule information and differences can be found on our web site.

### **Can my child be placed on a team that practices on specific days of the week?**

Unfortunately no, practice times/days are determined by the coaches and their availability.

Generally, coaches will ask parents what days/times work best for them. They will make every attempt to accommodate everyone’s time/day needs.

### **What is the difference my child will notice between last year’s T-Ball and this year’s Shetland division?**

The differences include unlimited base running, scorekeeping, consistent coach pitching, win/ loss records, double elimination playoff bracket, etc... More rule information and differences can be found on our web site.

### **What does ‘unlimited base running’ mean?**

Unlimited base running allows the runner of a batted ball to circle the bases until time is called by the umpire.

### **Who will be child’s coach?**

Coaches are parents who volunteer to coach a team for the season. It is usually a parent of a player on the team. Coaches are trained and screened by Irvine PONY. Players are placed on teams made by the commissioner of the division. Commissioners consider requests, schools attended and home locations when placing teams. Team are not finalized until the beginning of February,

## **Pinto Machine Pitch Pinto Kid Pitch**

## **Mustang**

### **Does my child have to tryout?**

Yes, tryouts are required for all players age 9 and 10 who are eligible to play in Mustang.

### **When are tryouts?**

Tryout schedules and locations are held in early January. Tryout times are posted on the Irvine Pony website.

### **What happens at tryouts?**

The kids are grouped by their assigned time. Together they go through a series of stations for evaluation in batting, fielding and throwing. The batting is against a pitching machine and they usually get approximately 3 swings. Players may use their own bat. Evaluation of the players is by experienced coaches selected by the VP and Irvine Pony board members. Results of tryouts are released only to coaches drafting a team and Pony staff.

### **Should my child practice/prepare for tryouts?**

Though not necessary, it is suggested. The League offers free clinics in January to help brush up on skills in preparation for the season.

### **When does the season start?**

The division draft is in early February. After the draft, the coaches begin practices - typically twice per week until the season begins. Opening Day for the first game is the first weekend in March. The regular season ends before Memorial Day.

### **Where, when and how often are practices held?**

Practices are held at Harvard Park, Brywood and Heritage Park. Coaches usually schedule two practices a week pre-season and one per week during regular season. Coaches pick their practice days and times from the available slots (which are limited by field availability).

### **Where, when and how often are games played?**

Games are played at Harvard Park. Each team plays once on Saturdays and once in midweek. Saturday games are normally scheduled throughout the day. Midweek games are at from 5pm-7:15pm.

### **How many games are scheduled?**

Typically there are 14-16 games, depending on the number of teams. The goal is to finish the regular season before Memorial Day.

### **How long are games?**

Games are 6 innings or maximum of 2 hours 15 minutes.

### **What is the minimum playing time for each player?**

Every player bats. No player may sit out twice on defense until every player has sat out once. Every player has to play in the infield within the first 4 innings.

### **What equipment is required to play?**

The minimum baseball equipment required is a baseball glove. You can expect to pay \$30-40 for a relatively good quality beginner glove made of leather (not plastic). Gloves are available from major sporting shop retailers. Please ask for assistance in getting the correct size if this is the first time a glove is being purchased. A protective cup is required for all male players. You will also require baseball/soccer cleats with rubber. Metal cleats are not permitted. Many players also purchase their own bats

### **How are teams formed?**

Mustang teams are formed through a draft. All players attend a tryout during which they are evaluated by experienced. After the tryouts are completed, a draft is held in which coaches select from the pool of available players. The draft is designed to optimize the likelihood that teams will be roughly equivalent in terms of talent. Each team is allowed up to three "protected" players (the children of the coaches and players who have played with that coach in the previous spring season) who are automatically placed on that team.

### **How many kids are on a team?**

There are 11 players on National league teams and 12 players on American league teams.

### **Can my child request a friend to play on the same team?**

The teams are assembled using the draft process to ensure balanced teams. There is no way to guarantee a request for a friend to play on the same team.

### **Do siblings play on the same team?**

Yes, siblings in the same division can play on the same team if the parents request it. Occasionally parents will request that siblings be placed on different teams, and those requests are also honored.

### **When will I be notified which team my child is on?**

The division draft occurs in early February. Coaches then contact their players after the draft and pass on the details such as the team roster and practice schedule. The League recommends that the coaches hold a parents' meeting before or after the first team practice in order to introduce themselves and ask for assistance during the season.

### **Are there post-season All Star opportunities?**

The Mustang National league division will field two All Star teams and the American League division will field one team.

### **How are All Stars selected?**

This process is detailed in our Admin Plan which can be downloaded from our website [http://irvinepony.com/documents/IrvinePONYAdminPlan\\_003.doc](http://irvinepony.com/documents/IrvinePONYAdminPlan_003.doc)

### **I'm interested in coaching, what should I do?**

Please complete a manager application and submit to the division VP. The manager application can be found on our website at <http://irvinepony.com/documents/IrvinePONYManagerApplication.pdf>. When completing registration, please check the "Head Coach" or "Assistant Coach" box in the volunteer section. The division VP will choose among the available candidates to select managers for the season. After the draft process, the head coaches will normally recruit parents who have volunteered to "Assist Coach" and other parents of their players as additional assistants. If you would like more information or have questions, please contact the division VP.

### **What opportunities are there for parents to assist the coaches during the season?**

Each team will need a team parent(s) to organize a snack schedule, distribute picture-day materials and organize the end-of-year party. If you are interested in this position then please select "Team Mom" from the available volunteer opportunities. The head coach usually asks for additional assistant coaches to help with practices and games, and for help in field preparation.

### **Bronco**

1. What age is my son or daughter eligible to play in the Bronco division?

### **Pony**

1. What age is my son or daughter eligible to play in the **PONY** division?

### **General League Info**

#### **How is Pony different from Little League?**

PONY plays a more complete form of baseball at an earlier age. Players with the ability to pitch can do so from age 7. Leading off, stealing, holding runners, dropped third strike etc. are played as early as 9 years old.

### **I have heard about the American and National league divisions within some age groups. Can you explain that?**

Starting at the age of 7 years old we create divisions based on ability. In the 7-8 year old Pinto division we break these into Machine and Kid Pitch where the top players play a more complete form of baseball and new players are allowed to develop skills in a more controlled machine pitch division. Starting at age 9 we create an advanced National League division and an American League division.

### **How are the teams formed?**

At the beginning of each season evaluations are held in each of the age group and a rating is created for each player. The rating is formed from not only the short try-out, but past ability history or other information deemed necessary to assess a player's ability. Once these ratings are done, a draft is held with a league official and the managers that have been selected by the division VP. Once the national league teams have been formed a draft is then held for the American League using the same guidelines and the ratings for the remaining players.

### **What is a “frozen” player and how does that work?**

Managers that are returning from the last spring season may “freeze” up to three players from the team they managed last spring. Those players are still rated and fall in the drafts rounds they would have been in based on the rating. If a manager doesn’t return, but his assistant coach does, that coach may also freeze players from that team.

### **How are head coaches selected?**

The division VP is charged with selecting the managers based on the Irvine Pony Admin Plan [http://irvinepony.com/documents/IrvinePONYAdminPlan\\_004.doc](http://irvinepony.com/documents/IrvinePONYAdminPlan_004.doc). Past performance, coaches evaluations and service to PONY are the most important tools used in this process. We want to create an environment of good fun baseball for the families in our program and we select adults we think can deliver this. Just because a parent was a good player doesn’t make them a good ambassador for our program. This process begins generally three months before each season. Go to the website for the manager application and forward it to the proper league official

### **How are post season All-Star teams formed?**

Information on this process can be found in our admin plan. Our goal is to reward the committed top players an opportunity to compete against other All-Star teams from around the area through the summer. Just being a top player is not enough to be selected to a team. The financial and time commitment must be understood and the fact the adult’s behavior during the season may affect a player’s selection.

[http://irvinepony.com/documents/IrvinePONYAdminPlan\\_004.doc](http://irvinepony.com/documents/IrvinePONYAdminPlan_004.doc)

## **Registration**

1. How can I register my child to play Irvine PONY?
2. What payment method do you require when registering?
3. What is the cut off date for registering for Spring?
4. How do I request a coach or friend when registering?

## **Equipment**

### **What if I don't have the right gear?**

email Wally Wong the equipment manager at [wallyball@earthlink.net](mailto:wallyball@earthlink.net)

### **What if I lose my gear?**

The league may charge you a replacement fee or it will be deducted from your deposit check.

### **Q.How much is the charge for gear replacement?**

The day you receive your gear, you will also receive a cost of replacement schedule.

### **What if I don't have a deposit check?**

You will not be issued any gear.

### **Do I have to return the bucket and the used and unused baseballs?**

Yes

### **How much is the deposit check?**

\$200.00 and written out to Irvine Pony

## **Sponsorships- Brenda**

### **Why should I be a sponsor?**

As you can imagine, there are many expenses involved in managing a large organization like this. Your sponsorship will provide for the purchase of uniforms, insurance, baseball equipment, umpires and umpire training, youth baseball clinics and coaches clinics, field maintenance, scoreboards, public announcing equipment, and the cost to operate our league website.

### **What is the sponsorship fee?**

Our Sponsorship program currently consists of 3 levels (all one-year terms):

#### **Package 1- \$750.00**

- (1) Banner to put on field throughout entire year, including playoffs and tournaments
- (1) Booth space on Opening Day or Memorial Day
- (1) Full-page ad in our yearbook
- (1) Appreciation plaque from league
- (1) Yearbook
- Recognition of sponsorship on Irvine PONY Website
- Recognition of your support on our Opening Day

#### **Package 2- \$500.00**

- (1) Banner to put on field throughout entire year including playoffs and tournaments
- Recognition of sponsorship on **Irvine PONY** Website
- Recognition of your support on our Opening Day

#### **Package 3- \$250.00**

- (1) Banner to put on field throughout entire year including playoffs and tournaments

**\*\*All packages are valid for one year and will include an opportunity for you to put a flyer or a coupon in our team packets. These will be given out to approximately 1,200 players and their families. (You will need to supply the flyer or coupon)**

## **Other options**

**Irvine PONY Baseball Scholarship-** will award \$500 scholarships to five (5) high school seniors who have given back to our organization as a volunteer or who participated as a player for a minimum of five (5) regular spring seasons.

**Yearbook-** This gives you the chance to put your business out there for the players and their parents to throughout the year.

**Raffle-** This is your opportunity to donate items for Opening Day, our Irvine Memorial Day Tournament and Home Run Derbies. Gift Certificates, T-shirts, electronic items, sporting goods, video games, gift baskets. The sky is the limit for a very good cause!

**Booth Space-** Opening Day and our Irvine Memorial Day Tournament are all-day events with all of the players and their family and friends walking throughout the park. You may have a booth space to advertise any way you like. (No food items can be sold or given away).

**Donation-** We will accept monetary donations from private person(s) or businesses.

## **How will sponsoring Irvine PONY benefit my company?**

Over 250,000 people come to Harvard Park each year! Your banner on any of our fields will allow great exposure for your company!

Our league's website draws over 4.2 million visits annually which will provide your business visibility to the local community and surrounding areas.

Sponsoring our league is an effective marketing tool which demonstrates your commitment to the children in our community.

Your donation is tax-deductible.

## **Advertising**

### **Will my child's name be in the local newspaper?**

Absolutely! Each Coach and/or Team Mom will provide details of games and can submit articles to the Publicity Chair. Jeannine will edit the articles and send them directly to the Irvine World News. The Irvine World News disburses its weekly papers on Tuesday's, Thursday's and Saturday's. They are delighted to announce children's names, accomplishments and wins.

### **Can my team submit an article regarding a great win we had?**

Yes. See above.

## **All Stars**

