

## General Overview

The "BLACK" Division is a non - competitive Shetland division of NPPB that will provide players an opportunity to further develop their baseball skills and ease with the transition to competitive Shetland division baseball.

## Specific Rules

1. During Games 1-5 (3 innings max): NO new innings after 1 hour 15 minutes, with a drop-dead of 1 hour 30 minutes. A continuous batting order will be used. All players in lineup will have an at bat.
2. During games 6-15 and Playoff (5 innings max): NO new innings after 1 hour 15 minutes, with a drop-dead of 1 hour 45 minutes. General rules will follow 5 innings max, 3-outs per inning and 5 runs max per inning. In the playoffs there will be a maximum of 10 runs in the 5<sup>th</sup> Inning.
3. If both coaches agree and if it does not appear that both teams will have an equal opportunity to bat before the drop-dead time limit, the game may be ended slightly in advance of the 1 hour 15 minute timeframe.
4. Innings
  - a. 3 innings max at the start of the season (games 1-5).
  - b. Then transitioning to 2 innings of continuous batting order and the remainder of the game at 3 outs per inning with a max of 5 innings (games 6 thru 10).
  - c. Then transitioning to 3 outs per inning and a max of 5 innings (games 11 thru playoffs).
5. Score will be kept for regular season starting on Game 11 thru Playoffs.
  - a. The home team is responsible to input the final game score by updating a Google Docs tracking spreadsheet provided by the Shetland division director and player agent within 24 hours of the game end time.
  - b. In the event a new inning cannot be completed due to time limit or weather the game score will revert back to the full previous inning completed. A complete game is the result of 3 full innings completed.
  - c. General rules will follow 5 innings max, 3-outs per inning and 5 runs max per inning. In the playoffs there will be a maximum of 10 runs in the 5<sup>th</sup> Inning.

## Offense

1. Players will bat in a continuous batting order. One Offensive coach will operate the pitching machine feeding pitches to the batter, The following rules will apply as the season progresses:

- a. Games 1 thru 5
  - i. All players in lineup will bat only once through the batting order per inning
  - ii. A Max of 5 pitches sent to the batter unless the last ball is a foul tip, then the batter will continue to be served balls.
  - iii. The Tee will be used when a batter fails to hit from the machine.
  - iv. 3 innings max
  
- b. Games 6 thru 10
  - i. 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> innings a Max of 5 pitches sent to the batter unless the last ball is a foul tip, then the batter will continue to be served balls. All players in lineup will bat only once through the batting order.
  - ii. The Tee will be used when a batter fails to hit from the machine in the **1st and 2nd innings ONLY.**
  - iii. 3<sup>rd</sup> inning at bat and ON a Max of 5 pitches from the machine unless the last ball is a foul tip, then the batter will continue to be served balls. If the batter fails to hit the ball in the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning and ON an out shall be recorded, no tee allowed and the player shall return to the dugout. General rules will follow 5 innings max, 3-outs per inning and 5 runs max in the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning and ON.
  
- c. Games 11 thru 15
  - i. **1<sup>st</sup> inning** at bat a Max of 5 pitches sent to the batter unless the last ball is a foul tip, then the batter will continue to be served balls. All players in lineup will bat only once through the batting order.
  - ii. The Tee will be used when a batter fails to hit from the machine in the **1<sup>st</sup> inning ONLY.**
  - iii. **2<sup>nd</sup> inning at bat and ON** a Max of 5 pitches from the machine unless the last ball is a foul tip, then the batter will continue to be served balls. If the batter fails to hit the ball in the 2<sup>nd</sup> inning and ON an out shall be recorded, no tee allowed and the player shall return to the dugout. General rules will follow 5 innings max, 3-outs per inning and 5 runs max in the 2<sup>nd</sup> inning and ON.
  - iv. If the batter fails to hit the ball on their 2nd at bat and ON, the batter is only allowed 3 swings with 5 pitches max, then an out shall be recorded. An out shall be recorded and the player shall return to the dugout If the 3<sup>rd</sup> swing and on is a foul tip the player shall continue to receive pitches.

- d. Playoffs
  - i. A Max of 5 pitches sent to the batter unless the last ball is a foul tip, the batter will continue to be served balls. If the batter fails to hit the ball an out shall be recorded. Batter is only allowed 3 swings with 5 pitches max, then an out shall be recorded. If the 3<sup>rd</sup> swing and on is a foul tip the player shall continue to receive pitches **(the tee will no longer be used in playoffs)**.
  - ii. General rules will follow 5 innings max, 3-outs per inning and 5 runs max per inning. In the playoffs there will be a maximum of 10 runs in the 5<sup>th</sup> Inning.
2. The settings on the pitching machine will be set at: Power Lever = 2: Micro Adjust = 3: Release Block = 4. If these settings are not suitable to provide a good strike pitch, at a hittable speed, the settings may be changed provided both opposing managers are in agreement.
3. A batted ball that hits the pitching coach is declared dead. It's ruled a dead ball, strike, no runners advance.
4. If a batted ball hits the machine and remains fair - the ball is in play. If the batted ball strikes the machine and goes foul - then the ball is dead, the batter is awarded first base and all runners advance 1 base.
5. When the ball is put in play, the pitching coach will often need to duck to become inconspicuous (especially on plays in the infield). Players can neither see over a tall adult, nor should they be required to throw a ball over the pitching coach's head to the intended target. If a live ball hits the coach pitcher or the coach interferes in the fielder's attempt to make a play the ball is dead and the lead runner is out. (This includes failing to get out of the way).
6. The pitching machine may at times throw bad pitches. It is up to the Coaches to agree and call a "NO PITCH" if they feel the batter could not hit the ball due to it being wild.
7. All players present will bat. If a player is late to the game, the player shall be placed at the bottom of the batting order. When a player is removed from the lineup due to injury or other reason, the lineup will be collapsed. No automatic out will be used. The player that was removed from the lineup may return to the game when they are ready.
8. Batters are not permitted to bunt or swing easy at the ball.
  - i. **(Penalty: The batter shall be called back to the plate, the swing is a foul-strike, the ball is dead and no runners may advance)**.

### Base Running

The following rules will apply to base running limitations to help players develop and games to be more balanced through the start of the season.

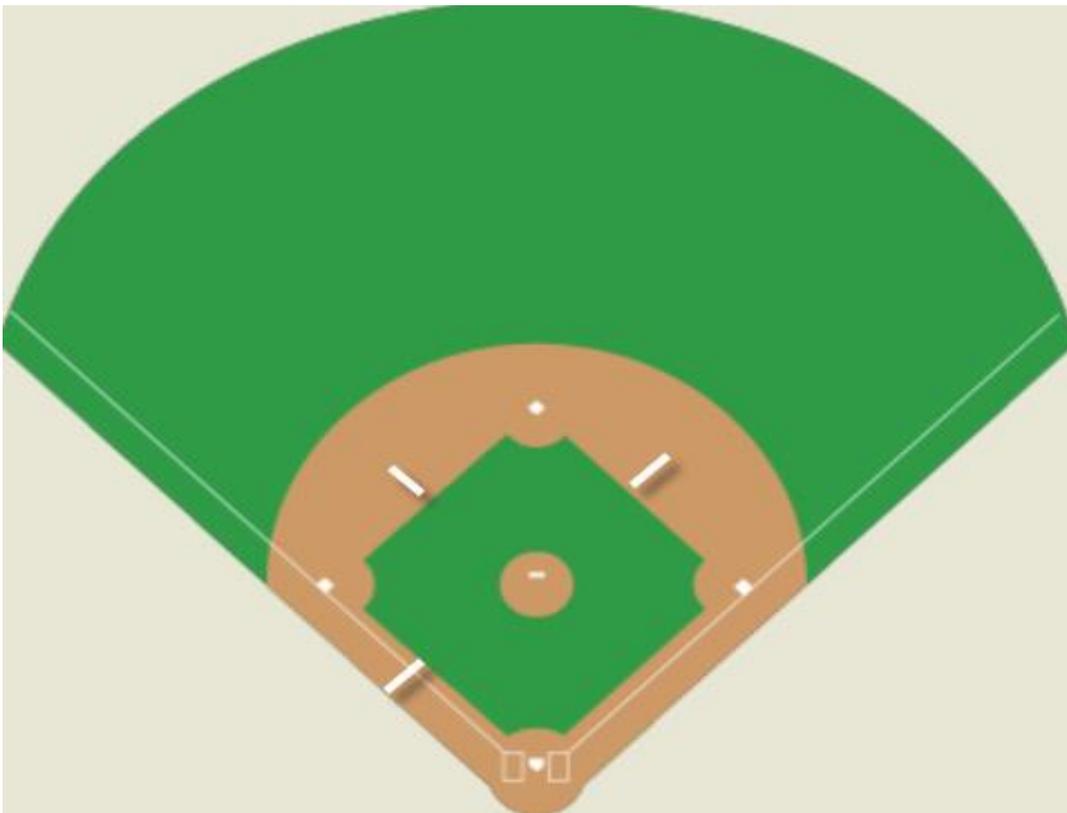
1. Games 1 thru 5
  - a. Singles only if ball does not go out of the infield, Even on an Overthrow
  - b. Doubles max, including the runner at 1<sup>st</sup>.
2. Games 6 thru 10
  - a. Singles only if ball does not go out of the infield, Runner may advance one more base on an overthrow.
  - b. Doubles max, or two-base max for runners at 1st
3. Games 11 thru 15
  - a. Triples Max
4. Playoffs
  - a. Wide Open, following the half way and time rules.
5. No lead offs. Base stealing is not allowed. Players cannot break contact with the base until the batter hits the ball.
  - i. *(Penalty if ball is hit: Runner is warned first and only allowed to advance one base on batted ball. Subsequent times with that player will result in the runner being called out).*

### Defense

1. Teams are limited to six (6) players in the infield and limited to four (4) players in the outfield (10 players total). Infield Positions are Catcher, Pitcher, 1<sup>st</sup> Base, 2<sup>nd</sup> Base, Shortstop & 3<sup>rd</sup> Base. Outfielder positions are left field, left-center, right-center, and right field.
2. The pitcher shall take a position 5 feet back and 3 feet left or right of the machine.
3. If at any time during the game a throw from a defensive player hits the pitching machine, the ball is dead and the runners advance one base.
4. Catchers must wear full protective gear: protective cup, shin guards, chest protector and helmet with face protector. Catchers must be in the correct position behind the plate while the ball is being pitched.

5. A Catcher is required unless the Team has fewer than ten (10) Players.
6. A play is over once an **infielder** (not an outfielder) is in complete possession of the ball within the infield, (i.e. on the dirt **in fair territory** at most fields), calls for and is award timeout by the umpire at their discretion. The player with the ball must have control of the ball and call time with both hands in the air.
  - a. The Player must call "TIME" for the play to be stopped, the play will continue if the player is holding the ball or is trying to make a defensive play.
7. On an Overthrow to any base, the runners are only entitled to the next base. Home base is frozen on any overthrow, unless the runner is past the half way mark between third and home before the overthrow occurs.
8. For Games 11- 15 and Playoffs:

There will be chalked hash marks between 1st and 2nd base, 2nd and 3rd base, and 3rd and home plate. These hash marks will be the guidelines for base advancements. If a player passes the hash mark in the middle of the base path before the ball has been declared dead, that player is allowed to advance to the next base. If the player has not reached the hash mark, they must go back to the previous base.



**Defensive Rotation Rule**

1. Player rotation is an important element of instructional Baseball. It is acknowledged that some children may be unprepared to protect themselves at various defensive positions (i.e., Pitcher, First Base). Our primary concern must be safety and doing our best to ensure no children get hurt. Managers are required to use their judgment when placing Players in certain defensive positions (i.e., Pitcher, 1st Base). Safety first.
  - a. A player can only play the 1<sup>st</sup> Base or Pitcher positions (Combined) a total of 2 times per game. Meaning a player who plays the pitcher position twice is not allowed to play 1<sup>st</sup> base in a single game, Etc.
  - b. Each player must play an infield position at least once by the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning; the Infield is defined as First Base, Second Base, Third Base, Pitcher and Shortstop only.
  - c. Each player must play an outfield position at least once by the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning; the Outfield is defined as Left Field, Center Left, Center Right and Right Field only.
2. Players are not permitted to play Pitcher or Catcher more than two (2) innings of any Regulation Game.
  - a. Managers are required to use their judgment when positioning Players at various defensive positions (i.e., Pitcher, 1st Base). Safety first.
3. Games 11-15 and Playoffs:

Managers are required to provide a Rotation Sheet to the opposing Team/Scorekeeper prior to the start of each game. Players are not permitted to play Pitcher or Catcher more than two (2) innings of any Regulation Game.

  - a. Managers are required to use their judgment when positioning Players at various defensive positions (i.e., Pitcher, 1st Base). Safety first.
  - b. Managers are required to provide a Rotation Sheet to the opposing Team/Scorekeeper prior to the start of each game.
4. No Player shall sit out (2) innings before all players on the team have sat out (1) innings & No Player shall sit out (3) innings before all players on the team have sat out (2) innings.

### Coaching

1. Defensive coaches allowed on the field
  - a. (For Games 1 thru 10) Two (2) defensive coaches will be allowed to be stationed in the field, with one coach positioned in the outfield and another allowed in the infield to assist with play position development. *Also one (1) coach (from either side) shall behind the catcher to assist with ball retrieval.*
  - b. (For games 11 thru 15) All defensive coaches shall remain off the field of play and positioned outside of the foul territory lines when giving direction or advice to their players. If required the defensive coach will be allowed to assist the catcher as needed.
2. Offensive coaches allowed on the field
  - (1) Operating the pitching machine
  - (1) If needed behind the catcher to assist with ball retrieval.
  - (1) First base coach
  - (1) Third base coach

**General Note:** Anything not covered here, will revert to NPPB Rules & Regulations, Pony Shetland Specific and MLB rules as applicable.