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ADULT SOFTBALL RULES
Fall 2026
Updated: September

League Information:
Please remember that Ladera Ranch Community Services (LARCS) does guarantee night of play but can **NOT** guarantee classification of league or game times. **Umpire Fee:** $20 per team per game including playoffs.

Website:
League schedules, scores and standings are available online at www.laderalife.com.

League Classification:
As stated above, LARCS can guarantee a team's night of play; however, LARCS does not guarantee league classification or game times from season to season. The following League Classification Policy is implemented when more than two divisions are offered on a given night (for example, D and D+).

- The team that wins the D Division Championship will be moved up to the D+ Division for the following season.
- The team that finishes in last place in the D+ Division will be moved down to the D Division for the following season.

League placement adjustments may be made as needed to accommodate new teams, fill division openings, and balance division sizes.

Points of Emphasis:
Maximum pitching height is 16 feet for D, D+, C- and coed.

Bats listed on the ASA Non-Approved Bat List will not be permitted for any league. For coed leagues, men can use single wall bats only. No double wall, multi-wall, two-piece bats or composite (handle or barrel) will be permitted for men in coed play. ALL BATS MUST HAVE AN ASA STAMP.

Homerun Rule:
For all fields and for all games, the "One-Up Rule" is in effect.
Teams may only hit a maximum of +1 homeruns relative to their opponent's home run totals.
Any batter that hits a homerun for a team that is already +1 in homeruns will immediately be declared out. Runners cannot advance. If a team is -1 in home runs relative to their opponent, that team may hit two consecutive home runs, moving them from -1, to even, to +1.

Homerun and Foul Balls
Teams are responsible for shagging **ALL** homerun and foul balls.

Pitchers Rectangle: The rectangle will extend six feet back from the pitching rubber and will be the same width as the rubber. Pitchers may pitch from anywhere inside the rectangle. The same rules will apply to the pitchers rectangle and the pitchers rubber.

Rosters

Rosters must be submitted prior to the start of the **FIRST GAME**. Add/drops must be submitted prior to the start of the **SIXTH GAME**. Teams that do not submit a roster will not be permitted to participate. **All players participating in the playoffs must have picture ID in order to compete. Failure to present it to the umpire upon request will disqualify that individual player from competition.**

Eligibility

All players must be 18 years or older. Players may only participate on **1 TEAM PER NIGHT.** If a player is found to be playing illegally, the player as well as the team manager will be suspended for the remainder of the season.

Playoff Eligibility

1. Players who are participating in playoff games must be on the team roster. Please note that no additions or deletions may be made to the team roster after the start of the sixth regular-season game. If a player is not on the team roster, they will be asked to leave the field immediately.
2. All players participating in playoffs must show a picture ID to the staff member onsite or umpire in order to compete. IDs will be checked every playoff game that a team participates in, including the championship game. If a player does not have a picture ID in hand, they will not be able to play during playoffs (photos of an ID will not be accepted). Even if the league director, staff, or umpire knows who you are, you will be required to produce a photo ID. NO EXCEPTIONS.
3. If an illegal player is identified and protested, the game in question will be forfeited, and the player in question and the team manager from the team in question will be suspended for the entire next season.

Rain Outs

Games are cancelled due to inclement weather. **If the weather is questionable, please visit https://laderalife.com/lifestyle/sports/field-status-and-conditions for updated field status. All games will be played as scheduled unless canceled** on the field status page. Canceled games will be made up at the end of the regular season prior to playoffs (time and field space permitting).

Rosters

1. Each team will submit a complete roster with a maximum of sixteen (16) players, eighteen (18) in Coed.
2. COMPLETED Rosters must be emailed to the League Director by the **SIXTH** regular season game.
3. No additions or deletions may be made after the start of the **SIXTH** regular season game.
4. All roster changes must be submitted by email or in person to the Community Services Office.
5. Roster changes will not be accepted by the umpires.

Forfeit Procedures

1. If you know your team cannot field enough players to play and need to forfeit, you are required to call or email the League Director before 3:30pm so staff can contact the other team and umpire.
2. If a team forfeits a game, the forfeiting team will pay the LARCS Umpire $40.00 prior to the start of their next game.
3. If a team forfeits a second time, the manager must pay $40 cash to the LARCS Umpire prior to their next game. Failure to pay will result in the team not participating until the forfeit fee has been paid.
4. If a team forfeits a third time, the manager must pay $40 cash to the LARCS Office and will automatically be dropped from the League with no refund.

For further information, please call the League Director at 949-388-1906.

Ladera Ranch Community Services
League Rules

Eligibility

a. Players must be at least 18 years of age.
b. A person may play on only one LARCS team per night. NOTE: If an illegal player is identified and protested in the specified period, the game will be forfeited and the player in question and the team manger will be suspended for the remainder of the season. See below for player protests.
c. Players must have pictured ID at all games.

II. League Format

a. Ten (10) games will be played.
b. Teams will be divided into leagues based on ability.
c. Ties in the standings will be broken by the following procedure:
    i. Any regular season forfeit.
    ii. Record against opposing team(s).
    iii. Run differential against opposing team(s).
    iii. Lowest number of runs allowed for entire season.
d. The top four teams will qualify for the playoffs. The 1st place team will oppose the 4th place team and the 2nd place team will oppose the 3rd place team. The winners will meet for the Championship – single elimination. **(Subject to change depending on league format).**

III. Rules of Play

Games will be played under the current SCMAF Softball Rules for Men with the following clarifications and/or additions/changes:
(***Additions/Changes to SCMAF rules are in BOLD ITALICS***):

a. No steel or metal cleats.
b. Bats:
    i. No bats that exceed the 98 mph of the ASA 2004 standard will be allowed. Therefore, any bat used must have the appropriate ASA 2004 or ASA 2000 certification seal on the bat, provided that bat has not lost its certification since receiving it from ASA. Bats that have lost their certification can be retrieved from the ASA website. Any bat manufactured prior to ASA testing may be allowed according to the sole discretion of the umpire if he/she believes that the bat being used would pass the "not to exceed 98 mph ASA standard".
    ii. No Titanium bats are allowed in any LARCS Adult Softball League.
    iii. All Men's LARCS Softball Leagues may use multi-walled bats only if the bat meets the above stated, SCMAF and ASA criteria.
    iv. ***In Coed LARCS Softball Leagues, men may use single-walled non-composite bats (no double wall, multi-wall, or 2 piece bats) only (including the handle).*** Women may use a multi-walled bat only if the bat meets the above stated, SCMAF, and ASA criteria.
    v. For information regarding bat eligibility, please contact the league administrator for a list or visit asasoftball.com.
        1. **Penalty** – Batter will be declared out, ball declared dead and the bat shall be removed from the game. **NOTE:** When the batter hits the ball (either fair or foul), the above penalty will be enforced. If a ball is not hit and the illegal bat is discovered the penalty will be its removal from the game.
c. Base runners may not leave the base at any time until the pitcher releases the ball. (**Penalty:** "No-Pitch" is called and the runner is out. After any legal pitch, if the ball is thrown to the base before the runner retouches, the runner is **forced out**. On a dropped or over thrown pickoff attempt, all runners may advance at their own risk without retouching the base.
d. **Substitution/Batting Order:** ***Lineups should be final five (5) minutes prior to game time.*** A team may list any combination of eight (8) to sixteen (16) rostered players (18 in coed) in the batting order and play any ten (10) on defense. Any players not listed in the starting line-up will be used as substitutes. Players arriving after the first pitch of the game (up to 16, 18 in coed) must be added immediately to the bottom

of the lineup or withheld as substitutes. A late arriving player may take a defensive position on the field immediately.

e. **Courtesy Runners:** A manager can use a courtesy runner for any base runner in an inning (no approval required). A courtesy runner may only be used after base runners have reached their bases and the play is dead. There is no limit to the number of courtesy runners allowed in an inning, however, a player may be a courtesy runner only once per inning. The manager may select any player to be the courtesy runner, provided that:
    1) Said player is not currently a base runner
    2) Said player in not the current batter
    3) Said player has not already been a courtesy runner in the current inning

    If a courtesy runner is on-base when it is his/her turn to bat, an additional out will be awarded to the defensive team. A courtesy runner cannot be requested for a courtesy runner. The courtesy runner is allowed to remain on base (unless there are 3 outs), and the correct batter is now the player whose name follows that of the batter called out. If the same player is used as a courtesy runner more than once in an inning, and the infraction is discovered while the improper runner is still on base, said improper runner shall be immediately replaced by the batter for whom the improper runner was inserted – no further penalty. If a courtesy runner is injured and must leave the game, and there are no legal substitutes available, the manager of the opposing team may choose to accept an out for the injured player leaving the base and game, or allow another courtesy runner for the injured player in exchange for an out the next time said injured player leaving the game is scheduled to bat (in accordance with Rule 6, Section 2G). In either case, only one out may be obtained for the removed player, and the injured player shall not thereafter participate in the game. A player officially becomes a courtesy runner when he/she takes his/her position on the base.

f. **Live Ball Appeal Play:** When ball is alive any fielder may appeal any runner once. The ball is alive and all runners may advance with liability of being put out. The ball must be thrown or carried to the base where the appeal is to be made.

g. **Dead Ball Appeal Play:** To make appeals after a DEAD BALL or "Time Out" is called by the umpire and the ball has been returned to the infield, any defensive player on the field with or without the ball may make a verbal appeal on a runner missing a base or leaving a base too soon on a caught fly ball. There is no need for a throw to a base or tag the appealed runner.

h. A **DOUBLE BASE** is permitted at first base. In this case, the following rules apply.
    i. A batted ball hitting the inside base shall be declared fair and a batted ball hitting the outside base shall be declared foul.
    ii. Whenever a play is being made on the batter-runner, the defense must use the inside base, and the batter-runner must use the outside base. On extra base hits or balls hit to the outfield where there is no play being made at the double base, the runner may touch either base.
    iii. Should the batter-runner reach and go beyond first base, he/she must return to the inside base.
    iv. Should the batter-runner round the base on a hit to the infield or outfield, he/she must return to the inside base.
    v. In the case that the batter-runner is required to touch the outside base, and touches **ANY PART** of the inside base, said runner shall be declared out. An appeal is not necessary, and the ball remains alive. In the case that the defensive player is required to touch the inside base and touches **ANY PART** of the outside base, said defensive player shall be considered to have missed the base. In the case that a batter-runner misses both bases in running to first base, it shall be treated as a base runner failing to touch a base. In this case, if an appeal is made prior to the batter-runner returning to the base, said batter-runner shall be declared out.

i. **Lineups:** Each manager will be provided with an official lineup card on which the batting order must be listed. Substitutions in the batting order must be made in an official manner. **Each player must print their name on the lineup card before each game.**

i. Each team is advised to keep its own official scorebook in case an error in the scoring. **The umpires' score is final**, unless it can be proved erroneous by scorebooks.

j. The umpire will keep the official time.

k. Time Limit: 1 hour and 5 minutes.

i. Games tied after 7 innings will be continued if the time limit has not expired.

ii. Any inning started must be completed unless the home team is ahead.

l. Mercy Rule: If a team is twenty (20) or more runs after four (4) innings OR fifteen (15) or more runs ahead after five (5) innings the game is called.

m. No batting or infield practice is allowed on the field before games.

n. A game shall be forfeited if:

i. A team fails to field eight (8) or more players when the umpire calls "Play Ball"

ii. Failure to pay the official the required amount <u>prior</u> to game time.

iii. If, in the opinion of the umpire, the manager does not have control of his team.

IV. Points of Emphasis

a. Interference/Obstruction

The key to understanding interference/obstruction is determining who has the right-of-wa at any given point. Generally, a defensive player only has the right-of-way to the baseline two instances: when he is in the act of fielding a batted ball or when he already has the ball in his possession. The result would be the runner called out for interference. In all other instances (including a thrown ball), the fielder has no right to the baseline and may not hinder or impede the runner's progress. Such act would be obstruction. A batter-runner carrying his/her bat to first base does not in itself constitute interference, and an automatic out should NOT be called unless said batter-runner commits interference in some other way.

b. Collisions

It is the intent of this rule book to avoid collisions whenever possible to prevent injury. AT NO TIME DO WE INSIST OR MAKE IT MANDATORY FOR ANYONE TO SLIDE, ONLY TO AVOID INTERFERENCE WITH A FIELDER. RUNNERS SHOULD ATTEMPT TO AVOID CONTACT WHEN EVER POSSIBLE. HOWEVER, IT IS POSSIBLE FOR CONTACT TO OCCUR WITHOUT INTERFERENCE.

V. Forfeit Procedures

a. A game shall be called a forfeit if

i. A team fails to have eight (8) players on the field at game time. **GAME TIME IS FORFEIT TIME.**

ii. A team fails to pay the officials at game time.

iii. In the opinion of the officials, a manager does not have complete control of his team.

iv. Continued harassment of officials and/or scorekeepers.

VI. Protests

a. All protests must be submitted to the Ladera Ranch Community Services Department, 28192 O'Neill Drive, Ladera Ranch, CA no later than 5:00 p.m. the following day.

b. Protests must be clearly written and accompanied by the required $20.00 cash-filing fee. If a protest is upheld, the fee shall be returned. **No protest will be considered or honored on any official's judgment call.**

c. All protests must be stated (before the next pitch) to the umpire and the opposing manager, stating the exact reason for the protest. The umpire shall note the protesting manager's statement exactly.

d. Protests regarding roster eligibility must be made before the first pitch of the batter in question, the first time through the batting order, or before the next pitch at the time the player in question enters the game.

i. In the case of a player protest, the player's identification will be checked and documented, and the game will be allowed to continue with the player in question participating. If the league administration determines that the player in question is illegal, then the game in question will be forfeited, and the player in question and the manager from the team in question will be suspended from the league for the remainder of the season, if proper protest procedures are followed.

e. Three (3) minutes will be allowed for a protest and added onto the end of the game.

f. If a protest is upheld, the game will be finished from the exact point where the protest was made. The same score, outs and position of base-runners will be used.

VII. Suspensions

Ejections: Any player, coach or manager who has been ejected from a ball game shall not be permitted to coach nor manage from the coach's box or the dugout or bleachers nor shall he/she participate or coach in the **next playable game**. Any game in which a suspended player participated shall be forfeited by his/her team. Any player or coach ejected from inflicting unnecessary bodily harm to any player, official, or spectator may be suspended for at least four games and cannot play until the League Director issues a final decision. The umpire shall provide a written report to the League Director stating the cause of the ejection. All ejected players must leave the facility within one (1) minute or his team may forfeit the game. Any player ejected twice in any league will be suspended for the rest of the season and the next scheduled season. **Players may receive a suspension(s) for pre-game or post-game misconduct even if the umpire is not there at the time.** Any player(s) or team that has been suspended will not be awarded a refund for any part or full game(s) missed. One game suspensions may not be appealed.

APPEALS: Any player who is suspended from participation for **three games or longer** may appeal the suspension in writing. Suspended players who are in the appeal process may not participate in the Adult Softball Program until the Review Board makes a final decision. The suspended player(s) may or may not be invited to speak on his/her behalf. Upon conclusion of the review process, the board's decision will be final. All appeals must be received within one week of suspension. **Any ejection will automatically result in a minimum of one-week.**

REVIEW BOARD: All suspension appeals will be decided by a Review Board comprised of responsible people appointed by the League Director. This Review Board may include but is not limited to: members of the Sports Staff, Community Services staff and other managers. Suspension appeals shall not be decided by managers. From the league in which the appeal has arisen. All decisions reached by the Review Board on suspension appeals shall be final.

MANAGERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Each team shall have one permanent rostered manager. Duties of the manager shall include, but not be limited to the following:

1. Be responsible for the conduct of their players and spectators before, during, and after the game.
2. Do everything possible to assist the umpire and scorekeeper in keeping the game conduct in an orderly manner.
3. Report and keep current the phone number (work and home) and address of the manager.
4. Call the Community Services Department and verify make-up games whenever your game has been cancelled or postponed. Failure to appear for a make-up game shall be declared a forfeit and will not be rescheduled.
5. Be responsible for giving the umpire the team line-up prior to game time and keeping him/her advised of any changes.
6. Assist the Field Ambassador in completing an accident report, in the event of a player related injury, by supplying the players name, address, phone number, and all other necessary information required by the Field Ambassador.
7. Managers found to be playing non-rostered or ineligible players may be suspended up to a maximum of three (3) league games.

PLAYERS AND TEAM CODE OF CONDUCT

These leagues are sponsored by the Ladera Ranch Community Services Department. **SPORTSMANSHIP RATES HIGH IN OUR LEAGUES, EVEN ABOVE WINNING,** and the League Director reserves the right to deny any team admittance to LARCS Adult Softball Leagues if their past conduct (in LARCS adult softball leagues or any other leagues) is not representative of good sportsmanship and/or may create a hazard to the well-being of the other players and participants, including staff umpires. **The Ladera Ranch Community Services Department also reserves the right to deny awards to any team or teams engaging in unsportsmanlike behavior during any part of the season (including playoffs).**

Playoff/Championship Games:
Teams are expected to compete to the best of their ability during all playoff games and demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times. Any team that does not give its full effort, fails to exhibit good sportsmanship, forfeits the game, or engages in conduct that negatively impacts the integrity of the game or league will be moved to the other division for future seasons or may not be invited to participate in future league play.

1. **NO PLAYER SHALL**: Lay a hand upon, push, shove, or strike, or threaten to strike an official.

   PENALTY: The player(s) shall be immediately ejected from the game and banned from participating in the City of Lake Forest Adult Sports Program and may be legally prosecuted for assault.

2. **NO PLAYER SHALL**: Refuse to abide by an official's decision.

   PENALTY: The player(s) shall be immediately suspended and shall be suspended for it least the following game (possibly more).

3. **NO PLAYER SHALL**: Be guilty of objectionable demonstrations by throwing of gloves, bats, balls or any other forceful action.

   PENALTY: The degree of infraction of this rule of good sportsmanship shall, in the official's judgment, draw a minimum penalty of warning to a maximum penalty of removal from the game. Officials are required to immediately suspend from further play, any player who throws a bat in an unsportsmanlike manner.

4. **NO PLAYER SHALL**: Be guilty of inflicting personal, verbal abuse upon any official for any real or imaginary wrong decision or judgment.

   PENALTY: Officials are required to immediately eject the player from the game and report the player to the League Director.

5. **NO PLAYER SHALL**: Discuss with an official in any manner the decision reached by such official except the manager or captain.

   PENALTY: The degree of infraction of this rule of good sportsmanship shall, in the official's judgment, draw a minimum penalty of warning or a maximum penalty of removal from the game.

6. **NO PLAYER SHALL**: Be guilty of using unnecessarily rough tactics in the play of the game against the body and person of any opposing player.

   PENALTY: Officials are required to immediately suspend the player from further play.

7. **NO PLAYER SHALL**: Be guilty of physical attack as an aggressor, upon any player, official or spectator.

   PENALTY: Officials are required to immediately suspend the player from further play and report such player to the League. Such player shall remain suspended until his/her case has been reviewed by the League Director. The length of suspension will depend on the incident but will usually involve several weeks to expulsion. Any player ejected for fighting, the player will be suspended for all league play for one (1) full year.

8. **NO PLAYER SHALL**: Be guilty of abusive verbal attack upon any player, official, or spectator.

   PENALTY: The degree of infraction of this rule of good sportsmanship shall, in the official's judgment, draw a minimum penalty of warning or a maximum penalty of removal from the game. Any player(s) who continues with this type of conduct throughout the season may be barred from future leagues.

9. **NO PLAYER SHALL**: Use profane, obscene, or vulgar language in any manner, or at any time.

   PENALTY: The degree of infraction of this rule of good sportsmanship shall, in the official's judgment, draw a minimum penalty of warning or a maximum penalty of removal from the game. Any player(s) who continues with this type of conduct throughout the season may be barred from future leagues.

10. **NO PLAYER SHALL**: Appear on the field of play at any time in an intoxicated condition or under the influence of a controlled substance.

    PENALTY: Officials are required to immediately suspend player(s) from play and report same to the League Director. Player(s) will be expelled for the remainder of the season.

* **NOTE: No alcoholic beverages or controlled substances are permitted in any park before, during and/or after games. Forfeiture of game may result if this occurs, along with expulsion from the league. Players violating this rule will be suspended immediately**.

11. **NO PLAYER SHALL**: Be guilty of gambling upon any play or the outcome of the game with spectator, player or opponent.

    PENALTY: Officials are required to report violations of this rule to the League Director.

12. **NO PLAYER SHALL**: Smoke or chew tobacco during the game on the field, in the dugout or in the bleacher area.

    PENALTY: Officials are required to warn players guilty of infraction of this rule, and failure of such players to comply will result in his/her removal from the game.

13. **NO PLAYER SHALL**: Be guilty of discussing publicly with spectators in a derogatory or abusive manner any play, decision, or his personal opinion of other players, during the game.

    PENALTY: Officials are required to warn players guilty of infraction of this rule, and failure of such players to comply will result in his/her removal from the game.

14. **NO PLAYER SHALL**: Permit any one to remain in the dugout or on the player's bench during the game who is not a playing member of the team.

    PENALTY: Officials are required to warn members of the team guilty of violation of this rule. Failure on the part of team members to enforce this rule will result in team being reported to the League Director for further action.

15. **NO PLAYER SHALL**: Be guilty of intentionally throwing his bat.

    PENALTY: Officials are required to immediately remove player from the game.

Team Name: (print)_____

Team Manager (print name)_____

Team Manager (sign)_____

Date:_____

Ladera Ranch Community Services
*****OFFICIAL PROTEST FORM*****

READ CAREFULLY:

1. First be sure you have a valid protest in accordance with your league rules.

2. The protest must be verbally expressed to the umpire before the next pitch. The opponent and the scorekeeper must also be notified before the game continues.

3. Remember, situations that involve only the accuracy of an official's judgment may be protested.

4. Your protest should be submitted on this form only and must be accompanied by a $20.00 protest fee and returned to the Community Services Department before 5:00 p.m. of the next working day. If the protest is ruled valid, the protest fee will be returned. It if is disallowed, the fee will be retained.

League: Mens ( ) Coed ( )
Division: D( ) C( ) C+( )

Date:_____ Time:_____ Field:_____
Teams:_____ vs._____
With_____ team at bat, Score _____ to _____ in favor of Team_____.
In the _____ of _____ Inning.
Runner on (check one or more) None___ First___ Second___ Third___
The count _____balls _____strikes.
The following play occurred (Explain in detail):_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

(NOTE: If more space is needed use the reverse side of this form.)
WHAT RULE WAS APPLIED? _____
REASON FOR PROTEST (State why you think the Umpire's decision was not in accordance with official rules of play and give rule number.)
_____
_____
Signed_____Phone_____
Address_____
Street City Zip