

LAS VEGAS SENIOR SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION, INC.

MEN'S PLAYING RULES

Revised August 18, 2011

GENERAL STATEMENT

The Las Vegas Senior Softball Association (LVSSA) is a nonprofit organization established to provide opportunities to senior men and women to participate in slow-pitch softball. The following Senior Softball Slow-pitch Playing Rules apply. Other slow-pitch rules and guidelines not covered herein are contained in the Senior Softball-USA Rulebook.

I. PARTICIPATION

A. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

1. AGE

a) Senior softball competition shall begin at the age of 50 and advance each five years thereafter to include the following age divisions of play; 55+, 60+, 65+, 70+, 75+ and 80+. Eligibility pertaining to age shall be the current calendar year.

2. PLAY DOWN RULE

a) Players may play down one classification level only. Example: A Major Plus player may drop down and play on a Major Team. A Major Player may drop down to an AAA Team. AAA player may drop down to an AA Team. The Tournament Director must approve more than one player dropping down on any one team. Request to play down one classification must be submitted to the Tournament Director in writing 30 days before start of the Tournament. Player(s) must be approved before they are permitted to play down. This rule applies to all players that intend to play down.

3. PROOF OF IDENTIFICATION

a) During the sanctioned event, all participants must have a legal picture identification card at all times. In addition to the photo, the card(s) must show a Date of Birth and Address for the player.

4. PLAYER CHECK-IN & PARTICIPATION RULE

a) The Team Manager is responsible for all team players to check in as a group before the first game. All rosters will be frozen and no new players can be added upon commencement of the Tournament unless previously approved by LVSSA. Players that have not checked in will not be able to participate in the elimination/championship games.

5. SNOWBIRD RULE

a) The Snowbird Rule shall apply to Major, AAA and AA Divisions Age Groups 50's, 55', 60's, 65's and 70's only. Teams may select two (2) players from East or West of the Mississippi River depending on their home site. EXAMPLE: A team from California may add two (2) players that reside west of the Mississippi River. A team from Florida may add two (2) players that reside east of the Mississippi River. **The Snowbird rule does not apply to the Major plus Division.**

- b) The following rules apply for all Snowbirds.
 - (1) Players must reside for a minimum period of three (3) consecutive complete months.
 - (2) Owning property is not the only requirement.
 - (3) Residing in the property for the required length of time is mandatory.
- c) Leasing Property is acceptable. However the same residency requirements must be met.
- d) Players must provide LVSSA with a Snowbird Address, Snowbird phone number, and current National Player Snowbird Card Number.
- e) Snowbirds can play in the state for which they receive the Snowbird exemption.
EXAMPLE: A player whose primary residence is in Minnesota and receives a Snowbird exemption for Arizona may play in Minnesota or bordering states, but can only play for a team from Arizona and not for a team from Arizona's boarding states.
- f) Protests of a player's eligibility require a \$75.00 fee per player. Play will cease until the protest is resolved. When protest for eligibility is upheld, the offending team shall forfeit the game played to the offended team.

6. OUT OF REGION PLAYERS

- a) Men's 50+, 55+, 60+, 65+ Major plus Teams Only may select two (2) players from East or West of the Mississippi River, depending on their home state. EXAMPLE: A team from California may add two (2) players that reside west of the Mississippi River. A team from Florida may add two (2) players that reside east of the Mississippi River.
- b) Men's Age Groups 50+, 55+, 60+, and 65+ for Division AA, AAA, and Major only may select players from their respective State and/or contiguous state(s). The 70+ (all Divisions) east or west apply. There are no boundaries for the 75's and 80's.

B. ROSTER

1. OPEN BOUNDARIES

- a) Any player can play when his state is contiguous to your state. There are NO boundaries for the 75+ and 80+ divisions. The 70 + will be East and West.

2. ROSTER NUMBERS

- a) An Official Senior Roster shall not exceed twenty (20) players.

3. AGE GROUP EXCEPTIONS

- a) The following rules apply to use players in a lower age group:
 - (1) Age groups 50+, 55+, 60+, 65+, and 70+: There will be no exceptions for these age groups.
 - (2) Age group 75+: A team can add up to five (5) players who turn 74 years of age in the current year.
 - (3) Age group 80+: A team can add up to seven (7) players who turn 78 and/or 79 years of age in the current year. You may have up to three (3) 78's only. The remaining players shall be 79.

C. TEAM RATING SYSTEM

- 1. The LVSSA may recognize and use the most current National Rating System (NRS). Participating NRS teams will use only players previously listed in other tournaments where NRS evaluation was in effect. The LVSSA tournament committee must approve any addition of new players to a recognized NRS team at least 30 days prior to the start of the tournament.

Non-NRS teams may be evaluated by the LVSSA on a team by team basis during the seeding round.

a) Note

- (1) Geographical boundaries as set forth above must be adhered to in all cases.
- (2) The LVSSA Tournament Director reserves the right to evaluate a team's rating up and through the seeding rounds of the World Masters tournament.
- (3) The LVSSA Tournament Director will screen all Tournament Team Entries to insure that teams are properly placed by their respective classifications pursuant to Paragraph 1-C above.
- (4) Teams winning the World Masters Tournament with a division containing (4) or more teams will be moved up to the next highest Division for all future LVSSA Tournaments.

D. Protests

1. Protests **shall not** be allowed or considered if they are based solely upon a decision involving judgment on the part of any umpire.

a) Note: examples of a protest, which will not be considered:

- (1) Whether a batted ball was fair or foul
- (2) Whether a base runner was safe or out
- (3) Whether a pitched ball was a strike or ball
- (4) Whether a runner did or did not touch a base
- (5) Whether a runner left the base too soon on a caught ball
- (6) Whether a fly-ball was or was not legally caught
- (7) Whether it was or was not an infield fly
- (8) Whether there was or was not interference
- (9) Whether the field is fit to continue or resume play
- (10) Whether there is sufficient light to continue play
- (11) Any other matter involving only the accuracy of the umpire's judgment

2. Protests received of the following types will be considered:

- a) Misunderstanding of a playing rule to a given situation
- b) Failure of an umpire to apply the correct rule to a given situation
- c) Failure to impose the correct penalty for a given violation

3. The notification of intent to protest must be made immediately before the next pitch.

- a) The manager of the protesting team shall immediately notify the plate umpire the game is being played under protest. The plate umpire will then notify the scorekeeper and the opposing manager.
- b) It is the umpire's responsibility to record the surrounding conditions to aid in the correct determination of the issue (i.e. Inning, outs, name(s) of players involved, runners on base, score etc).

4. A protest fee of \$75 will be immediately paid to Las Vegas Senior Softball Association, Inc.

- a) If the protest is upheld, the fee shall be returned to the payee.
 - (1) Fee of \$300 must be paid when protesting an altered bat.

5. The formal written protest should contain the following information:

- a) The date(s), time, and place for the game.
- b) The name(s) of the umpires and a scorekeeper.
- c) The rule and section of the official, or LVSSA rules under which the protest is filed.
- d) All essential facts involved in the matter protested. The decision made on a protested game

must result in one of the following:

- (1) The protest is found invalid and the game stands as played.
- (2) When the protest is allowed, the game is played from the point at which the incorrect decision was made correcting the erroneous call.

II. GAME

A. BALLS

1. The LVSSA will use a 44 core softball. *Note:* A 44 core 375 compression softball will be used at Henderson Arroyo Grande Park.

B. BALL DISTRIBUTION

1. All age Divisions will be given one (1) dozen softballs for the World Masters Tournament and six (6) softballs for the Spring Classic Tournament prior to the start of play in each respective age group. The cost of these balls is included in the tournament entry fee paid. The balls given to each team will be the only brand name, core, and compression softball permitted to be used in LVSSA Tournament play. These softballs are each team's sole responsibility to retrieve albeit foul balls, home runs or any other manner the ball leaves the confines of the playing field area.

2. When the game begins, the visiting team will give the home-plate umpire three (3) softballs prior to the game beginning. That visiting team is responsible to retrieve all balls that are hit or in any other manner leave the confines of the playing field area.

3. The home team will then give the home-plate umpire three (3) softballs they were provided and the home team will be responsible for retrieving all balls that leave the softball playing area.

A SUGGESTION TO TEAMS IS TO MARK YOUR LVSSA TOURNAMENT SOFTBALLS FOR IDENTIFICATION PURPOSES.

4. LVSSA Tournament softballs will be available for purchase in the event teams need additional softballs to continue to play in the tournament. The cost of balls follows:

- a) Six (6) softballs \$30 Twelve (12) softballs \$60

5. Use of any other ball than the ball provided by LVSSA will result in a **forfeit** by the offending team.

C. ALTERED BALL

1. At any time during an LVSSA game, the umpire has the authority to remove a ball from play whether he suspects it has been altered or not. For the purpose of this rule, umpire's decision is not subject to appeal.

2. An altered ball is considered altered when the physical structure of a legal ball has been changed. Example of an altered ball, but not limited to, is any ball frozen, or kept in a cooler to make it harder. Any ball that has been cooked in a microwave oven or the seams/stitches or cover has been altered in any way.

3. If a determination is made that a ball has been altered, we have a dead ball. This dead ball is immediately removed from the game and is turned over to the Tournament Director. The game is forfeited. The manager is ejected from the tournament and may be suspended by LVSSA from participating in future events.

D. BATS

1. Umpires and LVSSA staff have been instructed to inspect all bats to identify any unsafe, altered, or illegal bats. If a bat is believed to have been altered, the player will be asked for the bat and the bat will be immediately confiscated.

2. **NOTE:** Altered Bat Penalties.

a) If a bat is suspected of being altered to enhance performance, the tournament committee will determine if the bat will continue in play or be held for inspection. If the player refuses to turn over the bat, the player will be suspended for 10 years and the manager for one year and the team will forfeit all games. If the player voluntarily releases the bat and the bat is found to be altered, the player will be suspended for five years and the manager for one year. The second offense may result in a lifetime ban of the player. Players have the right to protest a bat; if they feel it has been altered, but they must pay the cost of testing and shipping the bat.”

3. **NOTE:** All bats used must be approved and must display no more than 1.21 BPF.

E. CLASSIFICATION OF TEAMS

1. AGE GROUPS: The following divisions by age groups will apply:

- a) 50+ through 70+: The following four (4) divisions apply to these age groups: Major plus
Major AAA AA
- b) 75+ Teams will be classified Major or AAA
- c) 80+: All teams are classified as Major.

F. FORMAT

1. For the Spring Tournament, a four (4) game minimum to include a two (2) game seeding round into a double elimination round and championship game(s) in all age groups and divisions. A seeding round robin format may be used to declare a winner for a division with less than 4 teams.

2. For the World Masters Tournament, a five (5) game minimum to include a three game seeding round and a double elimination round and championship game(s).

3. All teams must play in the seeding rounds of the Tournament in order to play in the Double Elimination and Championship Game(s). Any team that forfeits seeding games will not be permitted to participate in the Elimination and Championship Games.

4. LVSSA reserves the right to make necessary changes in the game structure should inclement weather becomes a factor. In this case, reduce all games, including the championship games, to five (5) innings and continue to use the 1 and 1 count for the entire tournament. The **RUN RULE** will not apply under this revised game structure.

G. HOME RUNS

1. The following home run rule will be in effect for age divisions: 50 – 55 – 60 - 65

- a) Major+: Twelve (12) home runs, one up home run rule in effect. Subsequent home runs considered a walk.
- b) Major: Seven (7) home runs, one up home run rule in effect. Subsequent home runs considered as a walk

- c) AAA: Two (2) home runs (no one up rule). Single base otherwise (considered as a walk)
- d) AA: One (1) home run (no one up rule). Subsequent home runs shall be an out.

2. Additional Notes

- a) The one-up home run rule can be used to win a game for the home team in the bottom of the last inning.
- b) The 70's: Major + are limited to (5) home runs. The one up rule is in effect. Subsequent home runs are considered a walk.
 - (1) Major 3 home runs (no one up rule). Subsequent home runs are considered a walk.
 - (2) AAA 2 home runs (no one up rule). Subsequent home runs are considered a walk.
 - (3) AA 1 home run. Subsequent home runs shall be an out.
- c) There is no home run rule for 75's & 80's.

H. RUNS

1. The following runs per inning rule will apply for each division:

- a) Major+ (50-55-60-65): 9 runs per team per inning except for the last declared inning and any extra innings.
 - 1) Major+: 70's 7 runs per team per inning except for the last declared inning and any extra innings.
- b) Major (50-55-60-65): 7 runs per team per inning except for the last declared inning and any extra innings.
 - 1) Major: 70's 5 runs per team per inning except for the last declared inning and any extra innings.
- c) AA and AAA: 5 runs per team per inning except for the last declared inning and any extra innings. 65-70-75-80:

I. RUN RULE:

1. The following run rule (mercy) will apply for each division. There will be a mercy rule during the elimination rounds and championship game(s).

- a) Major + & Major: 12 runs after 5 innings. 70
- b) Major +: 25 runs after 4 innings, 15 after 5 innings. 50-55-60-65:
- c) Major: 20 runs after 4 innings, 12 after 5 innings. 50-55-60-65:
- d) AA & AAA: 12 runs after 5 innings of play. 65-70-75-80:
- e) The Flip/Flop rule does not apply.

J. SEEDING ROUNDS:

1. Seeding Rounds the 60 minute rule will be used. The umpire will notify each team after 60 minutes of play has expired. Teams will finish that inning and play one more inning, as the open inning.
2. Elimination games the 70 minute rule will be used.
3. Championship Games will have no time limit. Run Rule will be in effect.
4. It is the responsibility of each team Manager or his designee to have their team(s) at the designated playing site forty-five (45) minutes prior to the scheduled Game Time. This is to ensure a prompt starting time should the game in progress end early.
5. Game time is forfeit time.

K. SEEDING GAMES

1. The following will apply to determine the seeding positions:
 - a) Head to head
 - b) Win-loss record
 - c) Run allowed
 - d) Runs scored
 - e) Coin flip
2. LVSSA reserves the right to combine Divisions of three or fewer teams within one age group and/or skill level. LVSSA will make every effort to notify Managers when Divisions have to be combined.
3. The team in question needs to declare their intention before the start of the game. If no declaration is made, the extra game will not be counted for seeding purposes.
4. In the event of a forfeited game, the score of said game shall be 15-0.

L. EQUALIZER RULE

1. When a Major + Team plays a Major Team, the Major Team is awarded five total runs at a rate of one run per inning beginning with the first inning.
2. When an AAA Team plays an AA Team, the AA Team is awarded five total runs at a rate of one run per inning beginning with the first inning.
3. The Tournament Director(s) reserve the right to waive the five run rules, if in their judgment, the two teams are considered to be close in ability.

M. TEAM DEFENSE

1. Age groups 50+, 55+, 60+ and 65+
 - a) A team will be allowed ten (10) players on defense.
 - b) Minimum of 9 players, an out is recorded when 10th player is due to bat.
2. Age groups 70+, 75+ and 80+:
 - a) A team will be allowed eleven (11) players on defense.

N. TEAM OFFENSE

1. All age groups:
 - a) A team will be allowed up to fifteen (15) players on offense.
 - b) These players must be listed in the starting lineup.

III. PLAYING RULES

A. BASE RUNNING

1. Courtesy Runner
 - a) An unlimited number of courtesy runners shall be allowed in all age groups and divisions. A courtesy runner may not be used more than once per inning, see note below. Any courtesy runner caught running more than once per inning or when it is their turn to bat will be declared out. If a courtesy runner is on base when it's their time to bat, an out will be recorded on the runner on base, with the runner being allowed to bat. All brackets will be allowed unlimited courtesy runners, who may enter at any base prior to the first pitch.
 - b) Any player on the roster may be used as a courtesy runner.

- c) There will be no courtesy runner for another courtesy runner. Exception: In the case of the courtesy runner being injured while running/sliding. In this case the injured courtesy runner cannot reenter the game, unless blood rule is in effect.
- d) A courtesy runner is in the game when he/she touches the base. If a courtesy runner is determined illegal, he/she will be called out upon touching the base and no other courtesy runner is allowed. The original runner **may not** return as a runner.
- e) The opposing team must appeal the use/reuse of the same courtesy runner before the pitch is made. Once the next pitch is made, the opposing team will not be able to appeal this issue.
- f) LVSSA will use the International Tie Breaker Rule for extra inning games. The last batter to hit the previous inning will start at 2nd base and a courtesy runner cannot be used until that runner reaches 3rd base
- g) Commitment line:
 - (1) Shall be marked across and perpendicular to the foul line and placed twenty (20) feet from home plate. Once a runner's foot touches the ground on, or past this line, the runner is committed to advance to the scoring plate/line.
- h) Scoring Plate/Line:
 - (1) A scoring plate or scoring line will be used.
- i) Scoring Plate:
 - (1) Will be situated approximately eight (8) feet from home plate and on an imaginary extension of the first base foul line. The base runner must touch the plate in order for the run to count except to avoid collision with a member of the defensive team or umpire. In those instances, foot contact with the ground at any point beyond the imaginary extension of the first base line will be allowed. No sliding permitted at home plate.
- j) Scoring Line:
 - (1) Will be an extension of the first base foul line. It will begin Approximately 8 feet from home plate and be at least five (5) feet in length. The base runner will be allowed to cross over any portion of the scoring line. The base runner will be considered scored when any part of his body touches the scoring line or beyond. A runner cannot be tagged out at home plate and can only be put out by a member of the defensive team touching any portion of the Strike Mat.
- k) A runner is out if he/she touches the strike mat.

B. BATTING

1. When any foul ball is caught, base runners may advance at their own risk.
2. All seeding games will start with a 1-1 count with a courtesy foul ball after two (2) strikes and the next struck ball must be fair for a total of 3 strikes per at bat. The double elimination games will start with a 0-0 count with a total of 3 strikes at bat.
3. Foul Tip: Any batted tip ball that is caught by the catcher is an out.
4. All Age groups may bat up to 15 roster players. These players must be listed in the starting lineup.

C. PITCHING

1. The following pitching rules will be in effect:
 - a) Pitching Arc: 6' minimum and 12' maximum rule will be used.
 - b) The umpire will verbalize, " illegal", on balls that are either below 6' or above 12'.
 - c) Strike Zone Mat:

- (1) A strike zone mat will be used for all age groups and divisions.
- (2) Legal pitches striking any portion of the mat will be called a strike.
- (3) The strike mat will measure 22" X 36".

d) The pitching box will be as wide as the pitching rubber and extended 3 feet behind the pitching rubber and 3 feet in front of the pitching rubber. The Pitcher must have at least one foot within or in contact with any portion of the pitching box upon release.

e) The Middle No-Hit Zone Rule does not apply.

f) When both teams mutually agree, a Pitching Screen may be used to protect the pitcher. This Rule applies only during the Spring Classic at the discretion of the Tournament Director.

1) Pitching Screen will be placed and positioned by the UMPIRE.

2) Pitching Screen will be no more than four (4) feet in front of the designated pitching area or pitching rubber.

3) Pitching Screen will not be more than six (6) inches from either side of the pitching area or pitching rubber for a right or left handed pitcher. This is measured from the back metal standing leg on either side of the screen.

4) The first move a Pitcher must make after the ball is pitched to the batter is to move behind the Screen prior to taking a defensive position.

5) Any ball hit into the Screen netting or metal casing/bars, will be a dead ball strike and a runner cannot advance. A third strike that is hit into the Screen netting or metal casing/bars, the batter will be declared out and scored the same as a third strike foul ball.

6) Any thrown ball into the screen by a defensive team will be a live ball and runners may advance at their own risk.

7) Once the Pitching Screen is placed in position, only the UMPIRE may move it as needed.

D. SLIDING

1. Sliding is permissible at 2nd and 3rd bases only. Batters going from the batter's box to first base must tag the alternate (outside) first base. There will be an alternate bag at first base and the batter running to first base must step on this alternate bag during a play at first. A batter will be called out by the umpire for stepping on the wrong base during a play at first. This is a judgment call by the umpire and cannot be appealed. No sliding is allowed at first base when coming from the batter's box, but a base runner may slide back to first

E. UNIFORMS AND PROTECTIVE GEAR

1. All players on a team shall wear uniforms alike in color and style.

2. Numbers must be worn on all uniforms. No player on the same team may wear identical numbers. Numbers must be a minimum of 6 inches.

3. Sleeveless shirts are allowed, as are shoulder straps (to shorten sleeves). Ball caps, visors (other than plastic) and headbands are optional for players, and if worn, can be mixed within the team.

Handkerchiefs do not qualify as headbands and cannot be worn around the head or neck.

4. Loose and dangerous jewelry is not allowed. Medical alert ID bracelets or necklaces and religious medals are allowed but should be worn or taped to the body as to not present a hazard.

a) NOTE: Players should be asked to remove or tape loose jewelry. If they fail to do so, that

player shall be removed from the game. Violation of the jewelry rule and uniform rule is not grounds for protest.

5. PROTECTIVE GEAR:

a) Pitchers shall wear protective headgear and shin guards at a minimum. If the pitcher elects not to wear the protective gear, he/she must sign a waiver of liability in favor of LVSSA. The pitcher must sign the waiver before they are allowed to pitch.

IV. SPRING TOURNAMENT - AWARDS

A. SPRING TOURNAMENT

1. Token of Victory will be awarded to the 1st and 2nd place teams of each division.

V. WORLD MASTERS TOURNAMENT - AWARDS

A. WORLD MASTERS CHAMPIONSHIP

1. First place winners in each division and in all age groups (providing there are a least four teams in the division) will receive victory recognition. Each winning team will be allowed to receive said recognition for only those players on the official roster (including one Team Manager) and who actively participated in the LVSSA World Masters Championship Tournament.

2. LVSSA Championship Rings may be ordered at the current market cost per ring. All orders must be placed through LVSSA. Payment by check shall accompany the ordered ring.

B. AWARDS-WORLD MASTERS TOURNAMENT

1. Token of Victory will be awarded to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place teams of each division

C. ALL TEAMS PLACING 1ST IN THE WORLD MASTERS TOURNAMENT

1. All teams placing 1st (Provided there were four (4) teams or more in the division) will be moved up to the next higher division. Example: A Major level team that wins 1st place will be moved up to Major+.

D. ALL WORLD MASTERS TOURNAMENT TEAMS - AWARDS

1. 1st place team manager names - 5 players
2. 2nd place team manager names - 3 players
3. 3rd place team manager names - 2 players
4. 1st Place Team One MVP
5. 2nd Place Team One DEFENSIVE MVP