

La Costa 35 Athletic Club Softball Rules (Adopted Jan 23rd, 2019)

Purpose of the LC35AC Recreational League:

The La Costa 35 Athletic Club was formed to promote Friendly Competition, Recreation, Good Sportsmanship, and Social Fun, in a safety-first environment for all members and their families. If winning the game is the most important goal for you as a participant, you are in the wrong organization. The competition that exists in our League is to come from the use of bats and gloves, not words or aggressive behavior. Any questions over Umpire calls are to be handled solely by the Team manager and Umpire, in a respectful manner. Un-sportsmanship conduct will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion from the League at the discretion of the League President or Board of Directors as further discussed herein.

1. General

- 1.1. Insurance: The League hereby provides notice to all members participating in League sponsored activities that they are playing at their own risk of accident or injury. It is recommended that all members carry insurance for such purposes. No player shall be allowed to participate in any League sponsored sporting activity without reading, signing and dating the “Agreement and Release of Liability” portion of the League’s registration form.
- 1.2. Registration: No player will be allowed to participate in League sanctioned events without completing and submitting a registration form. The registration form, which includes a “Release from Liability Statement” as well as an “Altered Bat Statement”, must be signed and dated by the player.
- 1.3. Fees: All fees must be paid in full by the beginning of regular season play. Players will not be allowed to play without payment. **Non-Carlsbad residents shall pay an extra \$5.00 per person/ per season.**
- 1.4. League Rules and Policies: The Board of Directors (Board) shall govern all League rules. Any rule or policy change must receive approval by a quorum of the Board. The President may, at his discretion, call a non-regular Board meeting in order to receive approval by a Board quorum for any rule change. Board quorum shall be as defined in the League Bylaws
- 1.5. City Rules and Regulations: All City of Carlsbad (City) rules, regulations and restrictions for use of City fields shall be adhered to.
- 1.6. Conduct: Conduct detrimental to the League, may be reason for disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion from the League. No refunds shall be provided to players who are suspended or expelled from the League for misconduct and/or disciplinary reasons.
- 1.7. Family Attendance: All players are encouraged to have Family and Friends attend League games.
- 1.8. Sponsorship: Length of Summer Softball team sponsorship shall two (2) years. Cost for the biennial sponsorship shall be \$200.00 and the sponsor provides team jerseys and hats. Jerseys will have LC35 on either the selves or breast pocket location.

2. Player Eligibility

- 2.1. Divisions: The La Costa 35 Athletic Club shall administer two divisions of men’s softball during summer play; the Senior (Elvis) Division and the Younger (Hotel California) Division and one division during winter play; Winter Division shall consist of a unified league with no separate age groups.
- 2.2. Eligibility:
 - 2.2.1. Hotel California Division (“YD”):
 - 2.2.1.1. Players must be 35 years of age during the calendar year of the summer softball season.
 - 2.2.2. Elvis Division (“SD”):
 - 2.2.2.1. Players must be 55 years of age or older during the calendar year of the summer softball season.
 - 2.2.3. Simultaneous participation in both Hotel California and Elvis Divisions
 - 2.2.3.1. Players must be 55 years of age during the calendar year in order to participate in both divisions.
 - 2.2.3.2. In the event of a scheduling conflict involving a player who plays in both divisions, the player must play with his Elvis Division team.

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2.2.4. Winter Softball:

2.2.4.1. Players must meet the eligibility requirements of the Hotel California or Elvis Divisions to play Winter Division softball.

2.3. Father – Son Rule:

2.3.1. Hotel California Division: Members who have sons and/or Son-In-Laws that turn 30-34 years of age during the calendar year may play softball with their son(s) in the Hotel California Division. Father and son(s) are to play on the same team until the son turns 35 years of age, after which the father and son may play on separate teams if requested and approved by the Commissioner.

2.3.1.1. Sons (ages 50-54) that play in the Hotel California Division may also play with their father in the Elvis Division.

2.3.2. Elvis Division: Members who have sons and/or Son-In-Laws that turn 50-54 years of age during the calendar year may play softball with their son(s) in the Elvis Division. Father and son(s) are to play on the same team until the son turns 55 years of age, after which the father and son may play on separate teams if requested and approved by the Commissioner.

2.3.3. Father-Son Rule when Father no longer participates:

2.3.3.1. In the event the father chooses to no longer play softball and the son desires to continue to play while under the minimum age of the respective division, the father and son must have previously played at least one full summer season together AND the respective Commissioner(s) must determine that the son remaining on the team is in the best interests of the League.

3. **Field Rules**

3.1. Dugouts: No beverages shall be allowed on the field of play, nor will open alcoholic beverages be allowed in the dugout. No tobacco products shall be allowed on the field or in the dugout. No sunflower seeds shall be allowed on the field or in the dugout. All other City field restrictions shall apply to League sanctioned events.

3.2. Uniforms: Each team must be uniformed in the same style shirt of the same color. Team sponsors are responsible for providing uniforms. Uniforms shall consist of jerseys and hats. Players may wear regulation baseball hats, other than those issued for the team, at their discretion.

3.3. Pitching Screens: Pitching screens shall be used during all League sponsored games. Further definition regarding the use of pitching screens during play is provided under Section 5.1 herein.

3.4. Protests: There are no protests allowed. Managers who have questions or concerns about calls during games should direct their questions and concerns to the umpire at that time. If further discussion is needed then the managers and umpires should consult with a league officer or the commissioner of that division. The decisions rendered by the Umpire shall be considered final.

3.5. Player Ejections: Players may be ejected from a game at any time that the Umpire feels that the conduct is detrimental to the League.

3.5.1. Player ejections will result in an automatic out when the ejected player is next scheduled to come up in the batting order (An out will be recorded for the ejected player's next at bat immediately following the ejection). Following that recorded out, the ejected player shall be removed from the rotation and no further outs shall be recorded against the ejected player.

3.5.2. The ejected player must leave the field of play. The ejected player is not allowed to in any way interfere with the continuation of the game or they will be ejected from the park. Any player that fails to comply and further conducts himself in an unsportsmanlike manner or manner detrimental to the League may lead to a forfeit of the game by the ejected player's team. Player ejection and game forfeit is at the discretion of the Umpire.

3.5.3. An ejected player shall be suspended from his team's next scheduled game.

3.5.4. All ejections shall be reported to the respective Commissioner and League President.

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- 3.5.5. Continued unsportsmanlike conduct, including ejection from games, may lead to suspension or expulsion of the player from the League at the discretion of the League President.
- 3.6. Other Rules/Regulations: Any other rules deemed necessary for play by the umpire in charge during a game will follow current ASA rules, but amended for three-pitch play as dictated by the rules identified herein.

4. Team Rosters & Players

- 4.1. Team Rosters: Dependent on registered player availability; it is the intent of the League that the maximum team roster for all teams in all divisions be 15 players. At no time shall a team roster consist of less than 13 players. Roster players are those players assigned to a specific team prior to the beginning of the season or added to the team during the season with the respective Commissioner's approval. Commissioners have the authority to increase a team's maximum roster by one player. Any additional increases must be approved by the President.
- 4.2. Team Balancing: It is the intent of this league to promote competitive games amongst all teams within their respective divisions. A team that routinely finishes first or a team that routinely finishes last is not in the best interest of this league. Additionally, a team that finishes undefeated or a team that finishes winless is also not in the best interest of this league. In order to promote balance among the teams within this League, the following shall be instituted:
- 4.2.1. Summer Softball: Before the start of the first preseason game, Commissioners shall consult with each Team Manager to determine the number/names of returning players, individual player move requests, and potential internal team conflicts. A Division Balancing Committee shall then be convened by each Commissioner to determine the placement of veteran players, players that desire to switch teams (Free Agents), and new players (Rookies). Upon completion, Commissioners shall submit team rosters to the League President for approval prior to the first regular season game. In the event of circumstances whereby there are a large number of first year players entering the League or there is an obvious imbalance in the League, the Commissioners and their respective balancing committees, upon approval by the President, may transfer players no later than the beginning of the third full week of the regular season.
- 4.2.2. Winter Softball: A draft of all participating players in the League shall be undertaken prior to the beginning of the winter season. Senior and Younger Division players participating in the summer season, as well as other players who choose to play only during the winter season, shall be combined for the Winter Softball draft. The Winter Softball Commissioner shall chair the draft to ensure that the drafting of players is in keeping with the rules as well as the spirit of the League.
- 4.3. Forfeit Rule: Each team will be required to have a minimum of eight (8) roster players available for play not later than ten (10) minutes after the scheduled game time. If a team has less than eight roster players available at that time, the team shall forfeit the game. Recognizing that total "runs allowed" during the season may impact team seeding for the playoffs, the score awarded on a forfeit game shall be 9 - 0.
- 4.4. Pick-up Players:
- 4.4.1. A team is able to pick up a maximum of 2 players to be able to play a legitimate game.
- 4.4.2. If the team cannot field at least 8 regular roster players, the game is forfeit.
- 4.4.3. The fill in player(s) must be identified to the umpire and the opposing manager before the game and agreed upon.
- 4.4.4. The fill in player(s) should be of average ability and should not be a player(s) that can drastically change the outcome of the game.
- 4.4.5. The fill in player(s) will play either catcher or outfield and must bat last.
- 4.4.6. The fill in player(s) will be allowed to pitch
- 4.4.7. Registered Senior / Younger / Winter Division players can play as pick-up players in their Division games, NO players may be picked up that are not registered for that particular year and that division.

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- 4.4.8. Playoffs: There are no pick up players during any playoff games.
- 4.5. Player Attendance: Managers are responsible for tracking, and submitting to the Commissioner upon request, the season game attendance of players. Any player that misses more than half of the regular season games may be ineligible for the playoffs. The determination to make a player ineligible for the playoffs shall rest with the respective Commissioner and will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Rulings regarding ineligibility may be appealed to the League President, whose decision shall be considered final.
- 4.6. Player Absence: All players shall advise their manager(s) in a timely manner if they will be missing a game. Repeated absences without manager notification are considered an act of poor sportsmanship and may lead to a suspension from the league.
- 4.7. Player Participation:
- 4.7.1. Defense: All participants must play a minimum of 4 innings in both the Elvis and Hotel California Divisions.
- 4.7.1.1. The minimum innings should only be used for a player that is injured, limited to playing catcher, or simultaneously participating in both divisions.
- 4.7.1.2. Managers should strive to equally distribute defensive innings amongst all players.
- 4.7.1.2.1. As an example: 9 defensive innings with 10 positions = 90 positions. 90 positions split by 15 players equals 6 defensive innings per player. This is not a requirement, simply a guideline to help determine equal participation.
- 4.7.2. Offense: All participants must bat. A late arriving player shall be placed at the bottom of the batting order.
- 4.7.3. Injured Player: An injured player may leave the game and drop out of the batting order without penalty. Teams may pick up a player to replace an injured player in order to field the minimum of 9 players. Pick player rules stated in 4.4 apply.
- 4.7.4. Player Called Away: A player called away may leave the game and drop out of the batting order without penalty so long as the Umpire does not feel the departure was conducted in bad sportsmanship. Managers of players that must leave prior to the end of the game shall notify the Umpire as soon as possible.
- 4.7.5. Pitchers: If an injured roster player is unable to play the field or bat, that player is still eligible to pitch for his team.

5. Playing Rules

- 5.1. Three-Pitch Softball: The team at bat must provide their pitcher from among their roster players. Pitcher(s) must avoid defensive plays.
- 5.1.1. A League furnished pitching screen will be provided for placement on the pitcher's mound and will be used for all games.
- 5.1.1.1. The placement of the pitching screen will be no closer than 35' from home plate. Its placement must be in a location where the pitcher is able to safely move behind it after each pitch.
- 5.1.2. Rules for the pitcher/screen
- 5.1.2.1. Balls hit by an offensive batter that hit the screen are "dead" balls.
- 5.1.2.2. Balls thrown by a defensive player (except by the Catcher returning a ball to the Pitcher) that hit the screen are "live" balls.
- 5.1.2.3. Any hit on the first or second pitch that hits the pitching screen shall be ruled a "dead ball strike". Any hit on a third pitch that hits the pitching screen shall be ruled a "dead ball" however the 3rd pitch shall be repeated until the hit is in the field of play or ruled a foul ball out.
- 5.1.2.4. Balls hit by an offensive batter that hit the Pitcher who is not behind the screen is an out. Safety shall always be the primary consideration during play.

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- 5.2. Base Placement: The 1st and 3rd bases shall be placed sixty-five (65) feet from home plate IAW ASA Men’s Slow Pitch Softball Rules. At Stagecoach Park, the second hash mark is 65 feet for play in the Elvis Division (“SD”) only. For both Hotel California Division (“YD”) and Winter Softball, the bases shall be placed seventy (70) feet from home plate, (the third hash mark at Stagecoach Park).
- 5.3. First Base: A double first base will be used. On throws from the infield, the runner must tag the outside bag (orange) first when running out a batted ball. Violation results in runner being called out.
- 5.4. Home Plate Area: A separate “Runner’s” Home Plate Line shall be provided at seventy feet (70’) from third base for (Young Division/ Winter Softball “YD”) and sixty-five feet (65’) for (Elvis Division “SD”) and it shall be located approximately 8 feet from the official Field Home Plate on the third base side (see Figure 1). The trailing edge of the Runner’s plate shall be in line with the extended first base foul line and with the front edge of the home plate line.
 - 5.4.1. A commitment line shall be located half way between third and home, which after being crossed by the advancing runner, the runner must proceed home, unless the umpire directs the runner back to third base by rule. All putouts at home are considered a force out. No tagging is allowed of the runner after crossing the commitment line.

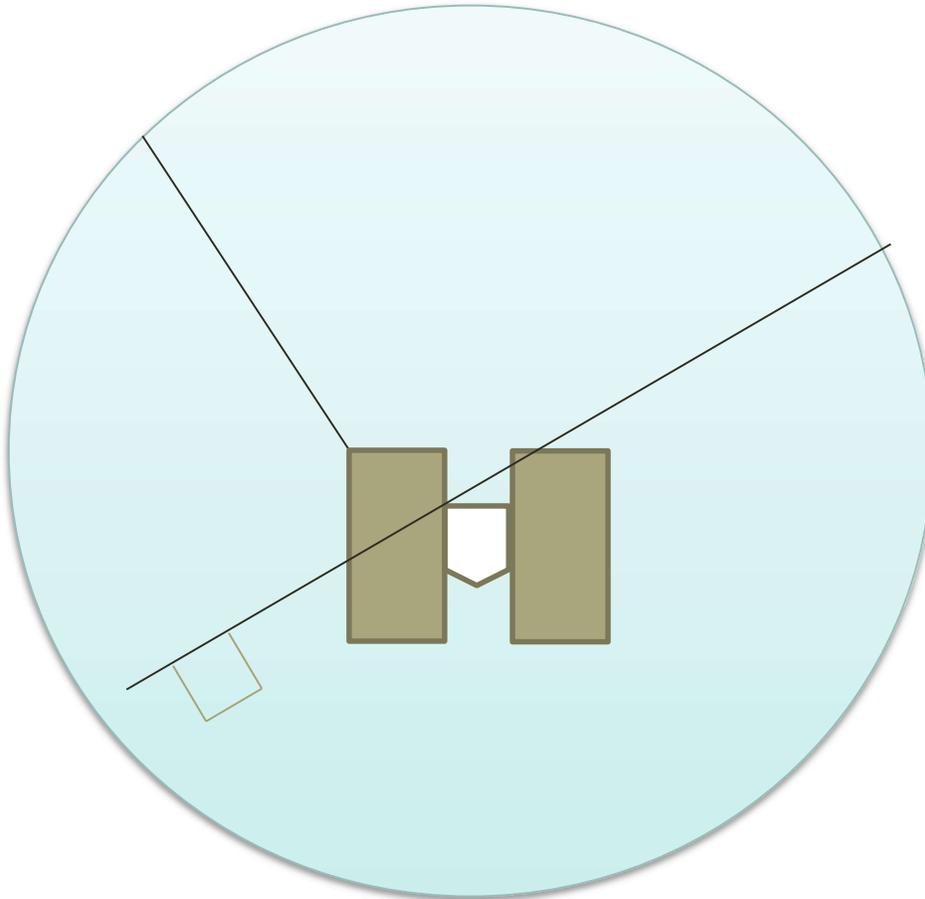


Figure 1
Home Plate Area

- 5.5. Scoring and Plays at Home Plate: Runner must touch the ground on or behind the home plate line with any part of the body before the catcher makes the force at home. This is the umpire’s judgement call.

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- 5.5.1. Runner is out for touching the Field Home Plate. Plays to home are considered forced outs and therefore the Catcher must tag the Field Home Plate in order to force out the runner.
- 5.6. Leading Off: A base runner may not leave any base until the ball is hit. Violation of this rule shall lead to the player being called out.
- 5.7. Runner Avoidance: For any close play at a base, the base runner must slide and/or attempt to avoid the defensive player making the play. If the umpire determines the base runner “intentionally” impeded the defensive player from making a play, the base runner shall be called out for interference. If that interference also prevented the same defensive player from attempting a subsequent play (i.e. a double play) that could have resulted in an additional out, the umpire may additionally rule the trailing base runner as out. The defensive player must make an attempt to throw the ball in a double play situation. This rule is intended to prevent unsportsmanlike base running and to maintain a safe playing environment.
- 5.8. Fake Tagging: Fake tagging is not allowed. A violation of this rule may result in the player being removed from game (Umpire’s discretion) and the base runner advancing one base.
- 5.9. Sliding: Sliding into 2nd or 3rd base or the home scoring plate line is optional, at player discretion. Sliding into 1st base shall be an automatic out.
- 5.10. Infield Warm-Up Throws: In the event that daily scheduled games times are running late, umpires have the discretion to limit infield throws to only one per infielder and/or the first three innings.
- 5.11. Substitute Runner: It is the intent of this rule to provide runners for those players who may not be able to run the bases due to injury or other health reasons.
- 5.11.1. Any player can substitute run
- 5.11.2. Must exhaust all healthy runners before you can run again in the same inning. A healthy runner is defined as one that runs for themselves normally
- 5.11.3. Runner must score or be called out on bases. No pinch runner for pinch runner. The only exception is to be in the event that the pinch runner gets injured
- 5.11.4. If runners position comes up to bat and the runner is still on base, he will be called out
- 5.11.5. The substitute runner can only start from a base. Not home plate.
- 5.11.6. If the player has a pre-game injury and will require a substitute runner for the entire game, the injured player(s) must be identified to the umpire prior to his first at bat.
- 5.11.7. If a player is injured during the game, a substitute runner shall be used for that inning of injury. Further innings shall be determined by the recovery of the player.
- 5.11.8. No substitute runners shall be allowed in the final or extra innings of a game for players who had not previously taken a substitute runner during the game. The only exception will be if the player was injured in the final or extra innings.
- 5.12. Designated Hitter:
- 5.12.1. Elvis Division: One DH allowed per team and they must be declared to umpire and opposing manager prior to the game. A manager cannot designate a player as a DH, the player must declare to the manager that they want to be a DH.
- 5.12.2. A player that is designated as a DH cannot subsequently in the same game play defense (i.e. in the event of another player injury)
- 5.13. Length of Game:
- 5.13.1. Game Duration: Nine (9) innings or time limit, whichever comes first. Game time shall start at the first pitch or at the commencement of the 10 minute waiting period for players to arrive.
- 5.13.1.1. HC Time limit: At 80 minutes +1 inning will be called. Game will end after that inning is completed.
- 5.13.1.2. Elvis Time limit: At 80 minutes +1 inning will be called. + 1 inning will be open runs. Game will end after that inning is completed.
- 5.13.2. Extra Innings:
- 5.13.2.1. Regular season: Extra innings are allowed until ninety minutes are reached. A base runner shall not be placed at 2nd base to expedite extra inning play.

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- 5.13.2.2. Playoffs: Extra innings of playoff games shall be played until one team scores more runs than their opponent and a complete inning is reached. A base runner shall not be placed at 2nd base to expedite extra inning play.
- 5.13.3. Flip Flop Rule: There will be no "Flip Flop Rule." Games will be played to completion with the visiting team always batting first and the home team always batting last. Completion of 9 innings or time limit will determine the end of the game.
- 5.14. Scoring:
- 5.14.1. Younger and Winter Division: There are no limitations to scoring.
- 5.14.2. Senior Division: Five Run Rule. The offensive team is permitted to score a maximum of five runs in innings one (1) thru eight (8), with no catch up allowed. During the ninth and extra innings, the 5-run rule is waived and a team at bat is allowed to score as many runs as possible prior to the third out of the inning.
- 5.15. Ground Rules: Any hit ball that bounces over the fence on fields 1, 2, or 3 will be a double. Any ball that rolls under a fence will be a ground rule double. Balls that go into or touch the soccer goal and nets are ground rule doubles. Any ball that is fair then goes out of play will be considered a ground rule double as well. Umpires shall discuss ground rules prior to each game with the Team Managers.
- 5.16. Game cancellations/postponements: If it is too dangerous to play, due to weather or daylight conditions, regular season and preseason games will be cancelled or postponed. If play was underway, the game shall be called complete if 5 innings (4.5 innings if the Home Team is ahead) of play are completed. If less than 4.5 innings of play are completed, the game will be rescheduled (if possible) and picked up at the point the game was stopped.
- 5.16.1. Playoffs will be completed based on 9 innings or time limit. The managers of both teams and the umpire will agree upon time remaining and starting point for the continuation at a later date. If less than 4.5 innings of play are completed, the game will be rescheduled and picked up at the point the game was stopped.
- 5.17. Batter's Box: The batter will start with at least 1 foot touching inside the batter's box
- 5.17.1. For the first two pitches the batter may not step in front of the front line while making contact with the ball.
- 5.17.1.1. If the batter does make contact it will be a dead ball strike
- 5.17.2. On the 3rd pitch the batter must follow the rules of starting position but must do what they can to make contact with the ball.

6. Equipment

- 6.1. Bats for Players 59 Years of Age or Younger: Bats must bear the stamp "ASA Approved" for all players who are 59 years of age or younger. Any bat not allowed by the City and any bat that does not have a bat performance factor (BPF) of 1.2 cannot be used. Use of a Non-ASA approved bat shall be ruled an automatic dead ball out.
- 6.2. Bats for Players 60 Years of Age or Older: Players who turn 60 years of age during the calendar year associated at the commencement of the season of play may use a bat as described under this section. Bats for use by players 60 years of age and older shall carry ASA certification, NSA certification and/or USSSA certification, or a Bat Performance Factor (BPF) certification of 1.2 for use in all LC35AC softball games and events. All non-ASA approved bats will be required to be presented to the League's Vice President in order for the bat to be approved for use by players 60 years of age and older. The bat will be marked with red tape immediately above the handle wrapping and in a manner acceptable to the owner and to the League's Vice President.
- 6.3. Altered Bats: Altered bats shall not be used. An altered bat is defined as: "Any bat whose physical characteristics and/or properties have been intentionally altered or modified for the purpose of improving performance."

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6.3.1. All players shall adhere to the requirements and conditions of the “Altered Bat Statement” included in the League’s Registration Form, which must be read, signed and dated by all players prior to their participation in any League sanctioned games. Any player caught using an altered bat shall be ejected from the game IAW paragraph 2.5. Any manager that is deemed to have been aware that his player was using an altered bat shall also be ejected from the game.

6.3.2. Methods of altering bats.

1. Wall Thinning / Barrel Shaving
2. Loading
3. Accelerated Break In (ABI) Techniques
4. Painting

6.4. Spikes: No metal cleats shall be allowed.

7. Playoffs

7.1. General: All teams shall play in the playoffs. Bracket format shall be determined by the commissioner.

7.2. Seeding: Playoff seeding shall be determined by the following:

- A. Highest Winning Percentage shall determine the top seed.
 - a. A Tie is worth 50% of a win.
- B. Lowest Winning Percentage shall determine the bottom seed.
- C. In the event Teams are tied, the best record on match up game(s) shall be the higher seed.
- D. In the event the Teams are still tied (split games) after 7.2.C above, the Team with the fewest runs allowed for the season shall be the higher seed.
- E. In the event the Teams are still tied after 7.2.D above, a coin toss shall determine the higher seed.

7.3. Playoff Home Team Advantage: Home Team advantage shall be determined by the following:

- A. Winner’s Bracket: Higher Seed shall be the home team.
- B. Loser’s Bracket: A coin toss shall determine Home Team. Higher seed shall call the coin toss.
- C. Championship Game #1: (Summer League) Team from Winner’s Bracket shall be home team.
- D. Championship Game #2 (Summer League) (if required) Coin toss shall determine home team. Higher Seed shall call the coin toss.
- E. Championship Game (Winter Division): Higher Seed shall be the home team

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Adopted by a quorum of the Board of Directors on Jan 23rd, 2018

Attested to by League officers March 4th, 2018

Steve Collo – LC35AC President

Daryl Wasano – LC35AC Vice-President

Jim Swartout – LC35AC Treasurer

Vacant – LC35AC Secretary

Vacant – Elvis Division

Karl Burk – Hotel California Division

Mike Bingham – Winter Division

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Version Control:

Dec 2016 updates

Section 2.2.2.1 and 2.2.3.1	“55+ Elvis Division” updated	Voted March 2016 Board
Section 4.4.1 thru 4.4.8	“Pick up player” updated	Voted March 2016 Board
Section 5.11.1 thru 5.11.4	“Rabbit Rule” updated	Voted March 2016 Board
Section 5.12	“Designated Hitter” added	March 2016 Board discussions
Section 5.4 and 5.5	“Home Plate Line” updated	August 2016 clarification

Feb 2017 updates

Section 5.1.1	“Pitching screen placement” added	Voted Feb 2017 Board
Section 5.13.1	80 minutes “no new inning” for playoffs updated	Voted Feb 2017 Board
Section 5.13.3	“Flip Flop Rule”	Clarification Feb 2017 Board
Section 5.16 and 5.16.1	Game continuation for playoffs	Voted Feb 2017 Board

Jan 2018 updates

Section 5.13.1	85 minutes no new/95 Minutes drop dead HC	Voted Jan 2018 Board
Section 5.13.1	80 minutes open inning declaration for Elvis	Voted Jan 2018 Board

Jan 2019 updates

Section 5.13.1	80 mins +1 inning game times	Voted Jan 2019 Board
Section 7.1	Bracket format determined by commissioner	Clarification Jan 2019
Section 15.7	Batter’s Box	Voted Jan 2019 Board

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