



# WOMENS LEAGUE



Competition Regulations  
2018/19

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# FOREWORD

These regulations govern the terms and conditions of the Softball ACT (SACT) Women's League for the 2018/19 season.

The following rules of interpretation apply to these regulations, unless the context requires otherwise:

- The singular includes the plural and vice versa;
- Where a word or phrase is defined, its other grammatical forms have the corresponding meaning, and;
- Headings are for convenience only and do not affect interpretation.

All competition games will be played, administered and governed by the Softball Australia Official Playing Rules (current version), together with these regulations and any published policy of SACT.

If any inconsistency or conflict exists between the SA rules, these regulations and any published policy of SACT, then these regulations and any published policy of SACT will apply.

SACT rulings are final regarding the application and interpretation of the rules.

Changes to playing rules and applications will not ordinarily be made, however SACT reserves the right to amend, modify or change these regulations prior to or during any stage of the competition.

A review period will be implemented after the completion of the 2018/19 season to review any changes that are required moving forward.

## DEFINITIONS

- **Club** means an affiliated entity of SACT that exists for competing in softball competitions in the SACT domestic competitions
- **Competition** means the Softball ACT Women's League
- **Competition Convenor** is the on-ground person in charge of running the competition
- **Farming Agreements** are when Clubs agree to work together to allow their teams to draw players from the other's Club
- **Finals Game** is a Semi Final or Grand Final in the Competition
- **Home Club** means the club with which a player is registered for the season
- **Home Team** means the team named first in the draw
- **Ineligible Player** means a player not suitably registered or qualified to play, and who will attract a forfeit if playing as such
- **Interchange Player** is the term for when a player is involved in a match involved a team other than their home team
- **International Representative Player** means a player that is a national open-aged representative of a country, including Australia
- **Open-Age Divisions** means graded competitions, including but not limited to A, B, C, D, E and F Grades
- **Playing** means when a player participates in a game
- **Received Forfeit** is when a team's opposition forfeits a game
- **Registered Club Member** means an individual registered or permitted in the appropriate way to a Club.
- **Registrar** means the person selected by the Club to deal with registration matters for that Club.
- **Round Games** means games played during the normal process of the season, and do not include finals.
- **Run Ahead Rule** is a local adaptation of the rule also known as the 'Mercy' rule, and is in play when a team is being beaten by a certain amount of runs at a given point of time in the match.
- **SUA ACT** means the Softball Umpires Association of the ACT
- **Under-Age Divisions** means U15 and U17 divisions
- **Weather Fixture** means a date set aside to replay Round Games affected by weather.

# 1 COMPETITION DETAILS

## 1.1 Length of Season

- a) The season will ordinarily be 14-16 weeks in length, plus finals.
- b) The season length for the competition or individual grades may be amended at SACT's discretion.
- c) Weather Fixtures will be scheduled at the beginning of the draw and used if required.

## 1.2 Nominations

- a) Affiliated Clubs will be invited by SACT to enter teams into the Competition.
- b) SACT will offer the following opportunities for Clubs to enter teams annually in the Women's League:
  - i. Open-Age Divisions
  - ii. Under-Age Divisions
    - U17 (players aged under 17 before October 1 each year)
    - U15 (players aged under 15 before October 1 each year)
- c) Clubs may nominate their preferred grade for Open-Age Divisions, however SACT will make the final determination.
- d) SACT will make a determination once nominations have been finalised as to the viability of the divisions.
- e) Requests to review the grading of a team may be made directly to SACT using the Grading Review Request Form, with all decisions being final.
- f) For the purpose of farming and interchange rulings, Under-Age Divisions are considered lower than Open-Age divisions, and U15 is considered lower than U17.

## 1.3 Fixtures

- a) Games will be scheduled by SACT and played to specifications expressed in the Appendix.

## 1.4 Prizes

- a) SACT will award a perpetual trophy for each competition division.
- b) SACT may award additional prizes at their discretion for various divisions.

## 1.5 Club Championships

- a) SACT will promote the Dan McKay Awards annually.
- b) SACT will award (at least) a large and small club award under a points matrix yet to be determined.

## 1.6 Canteen Duty

- a) Clubs will be rostered to assist with the operation of the canteen facility based on the number of teams they enter into competitions.
- b) Canteen Duty will be scheduled for teams outside of when the team is playing to ensure no interruption in games for players.
- c) The number of Duties will be determined pre-season but will be minimum required to facilitate the operation of the facility.
- d) SACT will provide a canteen roster sign-on sheet that attendees will sign to confirm attendance.
- e) Teams failing to perform their canteen duties will be sanctioned \$50 for each incidence of missing their duty, invoiced by SACT.

## 2 PLAYERS

### 2.1 Registration

- a) Players will be deemed eligible to participate in the ACT Women's League if they are:
  - i. Financial (not carrying a debt) with SACT and all affiliated entities, including Clubs
  - ii. Not suspended by SACT or any other affiliated entity
  - iii. At least 10 years of age as of October 1 of the year the competition begins
  - iv. A Registered Club Member
- b) Once centrally registered with their Club, Registrars will place individuals into a team.
- c) No player shall be registered in more than a single team in the competition.
- d) Players must be registered prior to their first game otherwise they will be deemed an ineligible player.
- e) Players may transfer clubs by using the clearance mechanism.

### 2.2 Player Grading

- a) Player grading will initially be the responsibility of each Club.
- b) Teams must have a minimum of seven (7) players registered with each team at the start of competition.
- c) Teams may register up to twenty (20) players in each team.
- d) In the circumstance where a player has been incorrectly graded by their Club, and the Club wishes to re-grade the player, a submission must be made using the Player Grading Form.
- e) Clubs represented by ineligible players will forfeit any game in which the ineligible player takes part.
- f) SACT reserves the right to re-grade any players in the interests of the competition.

### 2.3 Interchange

- a) Players may play in higher divisions than they are registered, within their Club, without restriction up to Round 12.
- b) Players may play in higher divisions than they are registered, outside their Club, through Farming Agreements registered through the Farming Agreement Form, up to Round 12.
- c) All Farming Agreements will be seasonal only, and published on the SACT website.
- d) In order to negate the possibility of a forfeited match, players may play "across" grades by filling positions **in the outfield only** (may not pitch, play infield, or be a designated runner/player), and **may not bat** (automatic out).
- e) Players are not permitted to play down grades.
- f) Interchange players are eligible for finals if they satisfy s2.5
- g) After Round 12, players will be locked into the grade in which they have played the most games for all remaining Rounds and Finals.
- h) Where the games played by the player is equal between two (2) teams, they are judged to be locked to the higher grade.

### 2.4 Representative Players

- a) International representative players must be graded in A Grade.
- b) State Players (having played in the last two (2) years) are not locked into grades under s2.3, however (with reference to their age-eligible team only) must be registered in:
  - i. Open – A Grade
  - ii. U23 – B Grade or higher
  - iii. U19 – B Grade or higher

- iv. U17 – C Grade or higher
- c) Requests for lower grading under must be submitted prior to the player's first game with:
  - i. Concise reasons for consideration;
  - ii. Detailed supporting evidence, and;
  - iii. May require further information as requested by SACT.

## 2.5 Finals Eligibility

- a) Players must play five (5) games for a team throughout the year to be eligible to play finals
- b) Weather Affected Rounds and Received Forfeits will have all registered players listed as having played that round.
- c) Requests for exemption from finals eligibility must be requested prior to the end of Round games, and will require:
  - i. Concise reasons for consideration;
  - ii. Detailed supporting evidence, and;
  - iii. May require further information as requested by SACT.

## 2.6 Uniform

- a) Clubs must register their Playing Uniform (playing top and playing pants) with SACT prior to the commencement of the season, including club colours and design(s).
- b) Playing uniforms must be alike in colour and design across a team's players.
- c) Coaches and Managers are encouraged to wear a uniform that reflects their Clubs' colours, however this is a matter for clubs to determine.
- d) All participants must remove any distracting personal items, such as jewellery or otherwise, if requested to do so by an umpire.

## 2.7 Player Safety

- a) Additional safety equipment (face masks, etc) are not subject to uniform rules.
- b) Players are to remove any jewellery that may cause injury to themselves or others.

# 3 FEES AND PAYMENT

## 3.1 Dates

- a) SACT requires payment from Clubs under the following terms:
  - i. Payment of club affiliation fees by 30 October
  - ii. Payment of 50% of team fees by 30 November
  - iii. Payment finalised by 30 December
- b) SACT requires Clubs to finalise SUAACT debts in line with SUAACT policy.

## 3.2 Penalties

- a) In the event of a Club not meeting the payment terms (either deadline) for team fees, SACT will impose an automatic late fee for each team fee not paid.
- b) Late fees will be advised when annual fees are released by SACT.
- c) Should a Club fail to meet deadlines, SACT may choose (at its discretion) to impose further sanctions, including:
  - i. Prevention of teams from playing in the competition (forced forfeit)
  - ii. Rendering individuals from the offending Club ineligible for State teams
  - iii. Engaging debt collection agencies to recover sums from Clubs

- d) SUAACT will publish their fees, policies and guidelines for payment at an appropriate time to enable transparency to Clubs.
- e) Should a Club fail to meet SUAACT policy deadlines, SACT will support SUAACT in their endeavours to collect payment, which may include any of the sanctions listed above.

## 4 FIELD SETUP

- a) SACT will assume responsibility for the preparation of the grounds at Hawker International Softball Centre and surrounding grounds.
- b) The Home team will ensure the diamond is ready for the game to commence, including:
  - i. obtaining bases and plates and setting them out if not completed;
  - ii. clearing moveable objects from the playing area; and
  - iii. ensuring the Competition Convenor is made aware of any major issues impacting the commencement or completion of the game in a timely manner.
- c) SACT will organise benches and shade structures to be delivered to any external diamonds.
- d) The first teams each round occupying either dugout for a fixture played on an external diamond will assume responsibility for setting up any shade structure and benches supplied.
- e) The last teams each round occupying either dugout for a fixture played on an external diamond will assume responsibility for deconstructing any shade structure and benches required and leaving at home base on the diamond.
- f) At the completion of the final game of the day, both teams are responsible for collecting the bases and returning them to the home plate.
- g) Failure of Clubs to perform these roles will result in SACT reconsidering the provision of this apparatus.

### Dead Ball Line

- h) A dead ball line should be marked on open grounds.
- i) Where a line is not marked, the umpire will determine its position.

### Backstop Nets

- j) A backstop net should be provided on all diamonds.
- k) The ball is considered in play when colliding with the net unless it is:
  - i. A foul ball, or;
  - ii. Goes over, under, through or lodges in the net.

## 5 PLAYING THE GAME

### 5.1 Team Makeup

- a) Teams must have a minimum of seven (7) players and a maximum of sixteen (16) players for each game, including finals.
- b) Where teams are playing with less than nine (9) players, vacancies must be noted on the line-up card, with automatic outs recorded in the positions that are vacant.
- c) Where a team is unable to field at least seven (7) players at the scheduled starting time of the game, the game will be delayed by ten (10) minutes to provide an opportunity to obtain the extra players.
- d) Teams that are unable to field a team of seven (7) players after this time will forfeit the match.



- e) Games that are delayed under this rule will have any time taken removed from the total game time.

## 5.2 Times

- a) There will be a maximum of 2 minutes between changeovers.
- b) Teams may call a single (1) conference in each innings when on offence.
- c) Teams may call a maximum of three (3) conferences per game when in defence, with one (1) extra conference permitted per extra innings.
- d) Conferences are restricted to a maximum of one (1) minute.

## 5.3 Recording

### Results

- a) The winner of the game shall be the team that scores more runs with both teams having completed at least three (3) innings (or 45 minutes' game time).

### Scorecards

- b) Scorecards will be provided by SACT.
- c) A scorecard shall be completed by each team.
- d) Each team will score the game independently for clarity of results.
- e) At the end of the game, teams will compare scorecards to confirm the result and players taking part in the game for qualification purposes, and sign the declaration section.
- f) Both scorecards are to be returned to the Competition Convenor via the scorecards box.

## 5.4 Forfeits

- a) Teams may organise to forfeit a game by contacting the SACT Operations Coordinator.
- b) Forfeits received prior to the day of the fixture shall record (0) competition points for the fixture but no further penalty.
- c) Forfeits received on the day of the fixture shall record (0) competition points for the fixture and attract a further penalty of (-2) points.
- d) SACT will notify affected Clubs and SUAAct of any forfeits as soon as practicable.
- e) Teams that forfeit a game will not have any players registered to their team listed as having played that game.
- f) Teams that receive a forfeit will have all registered players listed as having played that game.
- g) The score of a forfeited game shall be 7-0 in favour of the team not at fault.

## 5.5 Ladder and Points

- a) Points shall be awarded as follows:

<b>Win</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Draw</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Loss</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Forfeit (loss)*</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Forfeit (win)</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Bye</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Washout</b>	<b>2</b>

*\*Note that forfeit losses may attract penalties relating to the time of advice of forfeits*

- b) Where teams are equal on points, the highest run difference will determine the higher placed team.
- c) Where teams are equal on points and run difference, the most runs will be ranked higher.

## 5.6 Protests

### Rule Application

- a) Protests pertaining to the in-game application of the rules of Softball are not permitted during the game.
- b) Protests pertaining to the in-game application of the rules of Softball may be submitted after the game using the Protest Form.
- c) Protests received under s4.9(a) will be used for umpire education only and will not cause any part of the results of a game to change.

### Line-Up Validity

- d) Protests pertaining to the validity of a team's line-up are permitted to be lodged by any club, however must be lodged within 48 hours of the completion of the game.
- e) SACT will conduct spot-checks throughout the season to ensure Clubs are maintaining properly graded teams.
- f) There is no limitation on SACT spot-checks under this clause.

### Games Scores

- g) Protests pertaining to the recorded scoring of a game are permitted.
- h) Protests under this section must be lodged immediately after the game is completed using the Protest Form, and the scorecard must not be signed as signing the scorecard is agreement on the score.
- i) Notwithstanding the timeline above, if SACT becomes aware that a mistake has been made that is accepted by both teams, it will be rectified.

### Administration

- j) Protest outcomes will be administered by SACT, with formal notification delivered directly to the protesting team via their nominated email address and published on the SACT website.

## 5.7 Finals

- a) The ACT Women's League will conduct finals series in all divisions.
- b) Where there are only three (3) teams within a division, the following format will apply:

<b>Semi Final</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> v 3 <sup>rd</sup>
<b>Grand Final</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> v Winner SF

- c) Where there are more than three (3) teams within a division, the following format will apply:

<b>Semi Finals</b>	SF 1 – 1 <sup>st</sup> v 4 <sup>th</sup>
	SF 2 – 2 <sup>nd</sup> v 3 <sup>rd</sup>
<b>Grand Final</b>	Winner SF1 v Winner SF2

- d) Finals games will follow the same rules as Round Games, except they will enter a tie-break if scores are equal at the end of the game.

- e) If a tie-break is employed, any games following the fixture may be delayed to allow reasonable time for any players or umpires to present themselves for the following game.

## 6 UMPIRING

### 6.1 SUAACT

- a) SUAACT will allocate umpires to cover games throughout the ACT Women's League season.
- b) SUAACT will invoice Clubs directly at the end of the season for the costs of any games that have been covered.
- c) SUAACT will engage in dialogue with all Clubs and SACT regarding annual fees if there are any changes to rates from the previous year, prior to the SACT Annual General Meeting.

### 6.2 Duty Umpiring

- a) SACT will schedule teams across the season into a Duty Umpire Roster.
- b) The Duty Umpire Roster is to be used where SUAACT cannot provide umpires to facilitate a game.
- c) Clubs failing to provide umpires for a Duty Umpire Roster allocation shall attract a penalty of (-2) points to their highest-graded Club team for each missed duty, and be ineligible for Finals in the division that missed the duty.
- d) Teams will be allocated games as evenly as possible throughout the season.
- e) Teams will be allocated to timeslots outside their game time.
- f) SUAACT will attempt to ensure that clubs are evenly provided with umpires.
- g) SUAACT will advise Clubs and SACT of the coverage available by Thursday evening.
- h) Where teams are withdrawn from a division, SUAACT will reconfigure umpire allocations, and, pending circumstance, may require Clubs to take responsibility for the rostered duty of the withdrawn team.
- i) All plate umpires must wear the appropriate safety gear.

## 7 WEATHER AFFECTED ROUNDS

- a) Games may be adversely affected by weather, and SACT will support the safety of our participants as a primary function.
- b) Where weather affects a game, the SACT Weather Policy will apply, and the responsibility for modification or abandonment will rest with:

<b>Prior to day of fixture</b>	SACT Operations Coordinator
<b>On the day of fixture</b>	SACT Competition Convenor

- c) As soon as notified and practicable, SACT will place notification on social media (Softball ACT official Facebook page) and a dedicated WhatsApp group for this purpose.

### Abandonment

- d) If a Round Game is abandoned prior to play or fails to reach the thresholds under 5.3(a), the game will be rescheduled on a dedicated Weather Fixture throughout the season.
- e) If there is no Weather Fixture available, the game will be declared a Weather Affected Draw, resulting in a nil-all score line.
- f) Where a game is declared a Weather Affected Draw, teams are required to submit a scorecard with the players that would have played that weekend for the purposes of finals qualification prior to their next scheduled game.
- g) If a weather affects a game prior to play, any forfeit notifications and actions received prior to this declaration will be nullified.

### Finals Games

- h) If a Final is abandoned prior to play or fails to reach the thresholds under 5.3(a), then games will be rescheduled to the next week.
- i) If a rescheduled final is abandoned prior to play or fails to reach the thresholds under 5.3(a), the higher placed team on the ladder will be judged the winner.

## 8 DISCIPLINE

### 8.1 General

- a) All disciplinary matters arising from the ACT Women's League will be dealt with under the SACT Disciplinary Regulations, and includes spectators, participants, staff and volunteers, and any persons directly or indirectly connected with Softball the competition.

### 8.2 Ejection

- a) Umpires, SUAACT Umpire Coordinator and the Competition Convenor may eject persons from a game at any time for any reason.
- b) Any person ejected from a game must leave the grounds immediately.
- c) Leaving the grounds requires removal of the individual to a position where they can have no further influence on the game, including intimidating the umpire or any officials.
- d) Persons failing to adhere to the ejection ruling will have their supported team declared to forfeit, will personally be automatically banned for one (1) calendar month and may face further sanctions under the SACT Disciplinary Regulations.

## 9 COMPLAINTS

- a) All complaints should be directed via the Complaints Form to the SACT Operations Coordinator.

## 10 FORCE MAJEURE

- a) If SACT is unable to perform, in whole or part, any obligation under these regulations by reason of a force majeure event, SACT is relieved of that obligation under these regulations to the extent and the period it is unable to perform.
- b) SACT will endeavour to provide suitable alternatives for any circumstance affected in whole or part by a force majeure event, however is under no obligation to refund any amounts paid by Clubs to take part in the ACT Women's League.

## 11 Appendix – Rules Summary

GRADE	Max Game Time	No New Innings After	Pitching Distance	Declarations?	Ball Size	Across the Plate Rule	Run Ahead Rule	Strikezone	Restrictions
<b>A</b>	105 mins	90 mins	43'	No	12'	No	SAL Rules	SAL Rules	No
<b>B</b>	90 mins	80 mins	43'	No	12'	No	SAL Rules	SAL Rules	No
<b>C</b>	90 mins	80 mins	40'	Yes*	12'	No	Yes***	Top of armpits	No
<b>D</b>	90 mins	80 mins	40'	Yes*	12'	No	Yes***	Top of armpits	No
<b>E</b>	90 mins	80 mins	40'	Yes*	12'	9 Runs**	Yes***	Top of armpits	No
<b>F</b>	90 mins	80 mins	40'	Yes*	12'	9 Runs**	Yes***	Top of armpits	No
<b>U17</b>	90 mins	80 mins	43'	Yes*	12'	No	Yes***	Top of armpits	No intentional walks
<b>U15</b>	90 mins	80 mins	40'	Yes*	11'	9 Runs**	Yes***	Top of armpits	No intentional walks  Max of 3 innings (or part thereof) for each pitcher****

\*This rule is included for purposes of etiquette and not gamesmanship; application will be reviewed annually. Note that during finals, each team may only declare one (1) time.

\*\*Maximum of 9 runs scored in any innings – once the 9<sup>th</sup> run is scored, teams swap over.

\*\*\*If one team is 10+ runs ahead after 60 mins, losing team has option to stop play

\*\*\*\*Restriction lifted if game goes more than 6 innings