



Who We Are: An Introduction to the League

The Harris County Senior Softball League (HCSSL), in existence since 1981, is a slow-pitch softball league for men and women 50 years of age or older. You become eligible to play in the year in which you will turn 50. We play four nights a week (Monday through Thursday), almost year-around, on two fields leased from Harris County in Bayland Park, 6400 Bissonnet Street (just west of Hillcroft), Houston, TX 77074. HCSSL members handle the maintenance of those playing fields.

Three key things that may be different about HCSSL, as compared with other softball leagues you have known:

- (1) You sign up as an individual, not as a team. We handle assigning you to a team.
- (2) There are no separate leagues for men's, women's, or co-ed play. Nor are team assignments based on age. Everyone plays together, with division and team assignments based purely on ability.
- (3) Teams do not retain their membership from year to year, but are re-formed for each season, with managers drafting new teams each summer and summer player evaluations used to help form teams for the winter. This helps assure competitive balance and expands each player's base of friends, as some of this year's opponents become next year's teammates and vice versa.

We are organized into four divisions of play, based on ability. Players for teams in the top, most-competitive division are selected first, followed by the selection of players for teams in each successive division until all players have been selected. We form the teams separately for each of the two seasons we play — the summer season runs from April through mid-October, the winter season from November through early March.

Prior to selecting teams, we hold tryout sessions for new players in early March for the summer season and late October for the winter. The purpose is not to select who will get to play — everyone who registers to play and attends one of those sessions will be placed on a team — but to assess each person's ability and facilitate getting him/her placed on a team in the appropriate division.

In a typical summer season, there are about 310 players on 24 teams competing in those four divisions (6 teams each). The winter season is smaller, typically with 16-18 teams (4-5 teams in each of the four divisions). Our current players' ages range from 50 to 89. We play three games each night during the summer, two in the winter, beginning at 6:30 pm, on each of our two fields. Each team is scheduled to play two games per week. Typically, teams will play 45 to 50 games during the summer season, 20 to 25 games during the winter season. Regular-season games cancelled due to weather (rain and/or cold) are not re-scheduled.

We are affiliated with Senior Softball USA (SSUSA) and play under SSUSA playing rules, with a few additional modifications specifically for HCSSL. Those modifications are primarily designed to minimize player injuries, maximize playing time on our fields, and facilitate our operation as a league rather than for tournament-type competition.

Current registration fees can be found under the "Registration Info" Tab on our Home Page

If you have questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact HCSSL's president at president@hcssl.org.