

Coaches USA Softball (formerly ASA) Certification/Background Check/Lanyard Requirements

Coaches,

The Prince William Lassie League has worked very hard to develop and promote a “safe” and “secure” environment for its players so that they can enjoy their time on the field of play, as well as to minimize the “on the field confrontations” with umpires by untrained coaches and/or parents that had been a problem in previous seasons. Our goal to improve the quality of play for its players and to assist our coaches with better coaching tools for their benefit.

One of the primary improvement programs the league introduced was to provide better training to our coaches, umpires and players. For our coaches, we utilize a readily available training source provided by USA Softball known as the ACE (Achieve, Certify, and Educate) program. To ensure all of our coaches would participate in this program, we began making this a requirement for all Head Coaches (in 2012) and at least one Asst. Coach (2013). Now all coaching staff is required to participate in the ACE program. This program was instituted for two main reasons; one, to aid our coaches with better coaching tools and player development skills so they could be a better coach and second, to establish a limitation on who can and cannot address the umpire during the course of a game. The idea of limits on who can address the umpire was drawn from research and review of other sports leagues and has been deemed to be the best method to minimize the potential for confrontations between umpires and “non-umpires”.

Each Coach (Head or Assistant) must complete ACE level 1 their first year and ACE level 2 their third year coaching. If you attend the League Coach / Umpire training, by the Umpire Director, prior to the season, the League will reimburse you for your ACE (up to level 2) and Background check fees. It is encouraged that you complete additional levels, if you continue coaching.

To enforce this measure the league has established a policy of requiring the Head Coach and all of the Assistant Coaches to display their USA Softball ACE credentials on a lanyard. The display of these credentials is how the umpire will know who the coaches are for each team. The umpire is being directed that only the Head Coach or Acting Head Coach for each team with their credentials displayed are the only ones allowed to address them during the course of a game.

Starting April 1 of each season, all coaches are required to wear/display their ACE credentials at any time during practices and games. If a coach forgets or doesn't have their ACE credentials, then they will not be allowed to address the umpire during “actual game play” with the following exceptions; coaches meeting with the umpire just prior to the game, and if an injury to one of their players occurs during the game. The coach and/or assistant coach without ACE credentials will be allowed to address the umpire between innings, but not during actual play. However, they must identify themselves to the umpire prior to game start.

This policy may seem harsh to some coaches, but each ACE certified coach is a direct representative of the league and they need to fulfill their responsibilities accordingly. I don't think any coach would try to have its players play a game without the proper equipment (bats/balls/helmets, etc..) therefore the ACE credentials worn on a lanyard are part of your game equipment.

Again, the ultimate goal is to make the Lassie League experience more enjoyable for all and to have a safe and secure environment for our players.

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PWLL, President