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# The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

## Mix and mingle on the field

Adult kickball leagues offer easy exercise plus socializing.

By **Jon Waterhouse**  
For the AJC

Young professional seeks contemporaries for networking, friendship and a shared interest in third-grade sports.

Some adult Atlantans are trading in Internet personals, rubbing elbows at nightclubs and other average hobnobbing for a little playground whimsy. Both singles and married couples are channeling their inner elementary schooler and using kickball as a way to mix and mingle.

"It's really a social networking club with a kickball theme," says Thomas Johnson, who helps run the World Adult Kickball Association's Atlanta divisions.

Local coed leagues find teams with irreverent names like Kickballas and The Hangovers blowing off steam on the field. The game is basically a baseball-meets-soccer-meets-dodgeball hybrid.

The rules are pretty much the same as baseball without bats and gloves. Each game usually lasts between four and seven innings, and between 45 minutes and an hour. Instead of a pitcher throwing a baseball, the roller rolls a soft and bouncy ball — it's about the size of a soccer ball — to each batter, er, kicker. In-field players can tag runners and take them out with force plays, but they're also allowed to throw the ball at

runners, too. If the ball touches a runner, they're out.

And after each game, the players usually adjourn to a nearby restaurant or watering hole for smack talk and giggles.

Although the grown-up kickball craze can be found in various forms around town, from pick-up games in parks to church group activities, the following are the big three when it comes to in-town, coed kickball.

### Gokickball

Registration for this league's fall season closes Aug. 26. Games crank up the week of Sept. 8 and wrap the week of Oct. 27. Each season has seven regular season games and a season-ending tournament. Kickballers go foot-to-foot at area parks including Coan Middle School in Little Five Points, Hammond Park in Sandy Springs, Lynwood Park in Brookhaven and Piedmont Park in Midtown. Games take place Monday through Thursday evenings, and Saturday and Sunday afternoons and evenings, with referees and field supervisors overseeing the action. Players must be at least 21 and fork over \$54 each to play. Each baller gets a team T-shirt he or she can keep for posterity.

For more information:  
[www.gokickball.com/atlanta](http://www.gokickball.com/atlanta).

### World Adult Kickball Association (WAKA)

The Atlanta branch of this kickball group offers fall, spring

and summer seasons. Fall season registration closes Aug. 30.

The season consists of eight regular games plus division playoffs. (WAKA also hosts an all-city tournament and a national Founders Cup Tournament held in Vegas each year.) The fall season launches around Labor Day and ends in late November. Approximately 1,200 to 1,500 players are expected to participate across seven or eight divisions with a maximum of 16 teams per division. Each division has a colorful name, usually with a Georgia-related theme like Peachtree, Thrasher or Bandit, a nod to the Burt Reynolds trucker flicks shot on local soil. Division games take place at Hammond, Candler and Piedmont parks on specific nights, either Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays or Sundays.

Organizers say the Thursday night division is the most popular. It costs \$64 a person to play, which includes team jersey, equipment, field fees and permits.

A portion of each registration fee goes into the social fund that facilitates parties that help raise money for various charities like Hands on Atlanta, SafeHouse Outreach, East Atlanta Kids Club and Children's Miracle Network.

Each team has a home restaurant or bar like Charlie Mopps Public House in Sandy Springs where they congregate after games. Some keep the competi-



The World Adult Kickball Association's Atlanta divisions play the classic playground game at Hammond Park and other locales.  
World Adult Kickball Association

tion going by playing trivia, while others simply devour grub, tip back libations and trade conversation.

For more information:  
[www.atlantakickball.com](http://www.atlantakickball.com).

### Georgia Sports Leagues

The organizers describe this smaller, more intimate league as relaxed, family-oriented and not overly competitive. Players often bring their significant others and children to watch the games.

The fall season starts around Labor Day and ends just before Thanksgiving. The cost is \$30 per player to be placed on a team. Some friends and groups put their own teams together consisting of 10 players and pay a team fee of \$225 per season. Fees help with equipment and referee costs. Teams like Saved By The Balls and Too Drunk For Softball gather at the Mount Vernon Baptist Church field in Sandy Springs. Players are asked to wear like-colored team shirts. Games drop on Saturdays typically between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m.

For more information: 678-799-0159, [www.georgiasportsleagues.org](http://www.georgiasportsleagues.org).

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