

# HAVING A BALL OUT ON THE BEACH

## Kickball gets weekend off to good start

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In most sports, screaming at your opponent after pegging them with the ball might get you in some trouble with the officials — or at least the other team. Then again, most sports don't have one of the teams show up in costume every week.

That's because most sports aren't kickball.

For most, Thursday is just one day closer to the weekend. For the members of Black's Beaches, one of 16 teams in the California West Beach League, Thursday is a chance to get a little crazy.

"We're out here to have fun, and that's one of the things," said Casey Black, Black's Beaches lone male player who was dressed like a rocker with well-executed Starchild face makeup to go along with the garb. "I've been playing this for a couple of seasons with some teams that are really competitive. I think when other teams play us they realize we're just trying to have fun — and I think we have the most fun out of all the teams — obviously, I'm dressed up like a (big) idiot."

Black's Beaches is not the only team that gets dressed up on Thursdays, but they undoubtedly do it the best. The team wore an assortment of outfits ranging from '80s rock starts to '90s grunge and pop stars. They carried a giant fake boom box complete with an iPod dock for some

real music.

"For us, getting ready is probably the majority of our game day," team

*Please see **KICKBALL** on **C3***

captain Macie Berlin said. "It involves a little bit of primping and prepping. We always have themes. We've done anything from Old Macdonald and his farm today we're rock stars and pop stars. We always play hard though too — we try to do our best and then afterward we go down with everybody to the neighborhood and line up to do flip cup with everyone.

"It gets creative juices flowing. We don't want to just play sports, we want to be creative as well."

The creative juices weren't the only liquids flowing on West Beach on Thursday, as the teams prepare, play and celebrate after games with generous amounts of social lubricants.

But the kickball league, part of the World Adult Kickball Association, is about more than just goofing off in the sand. Berlin, who is also the league's charity director, explained that the teams frequently generate funds and donate goods to local charities.

"Basically what I do is go around to all of the teams and involve different charities — mostly locally but some national ones too," Berlin said. "We did a clothing drive the first few weeks and collected over 1,200 items between all the teams. We make a chart and keep track of who donates how much and the winning team gets a party thrown."

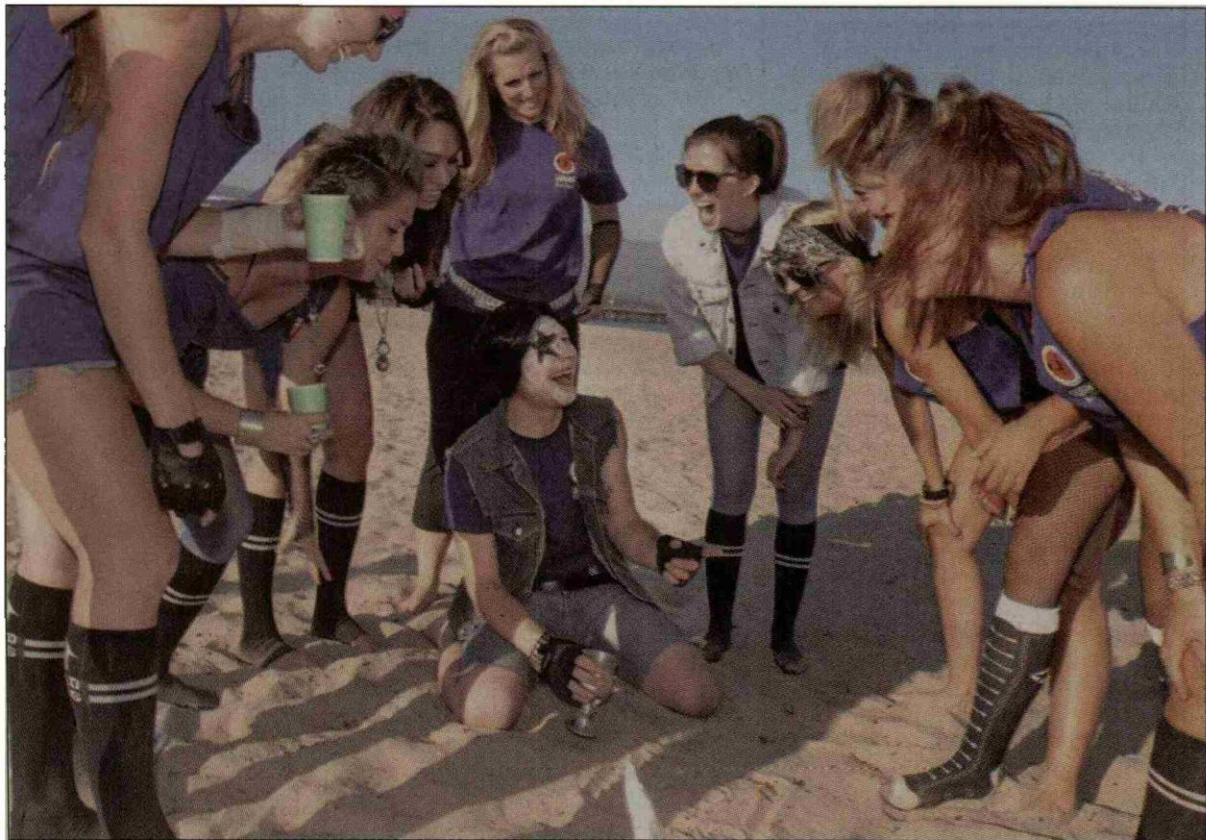
And a good party is exactly what most of the teams are looking for on Thursday evenings. The league will be sponsoring a charity concert at Dargan's Irish Pub next week as part of their charity work.

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THOMAS KELSEY / NEWS-PRESS

**Black's Beaches strike a pose after their game on Thursday at West Beach.**



THOMAS KELSEY / NEWS-PRESS

**Casey Black, center, has a meeting in between innings with his teammates during a game of kickball as part of the West Beach Kickball League.**