

# **MEN'S GAME**

## THREE-PERSON MECHANICS MANUAL



### **US LACROSSE NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS**

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*An Official Publication of the National Governing Body of Lacrosse*



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

This manual is the result of the hard work and collaboration of the Men's Officials Training Group (David Bagdan, Michael Cross, Kevin Curley, Matt Dempsey, Eric Evans, Bob Hutchinson, Jim Maddock, Jason Rhodes, Lee Spitzer) and the staff of US Lacrosse that supports this group. It should be used as a resource for individuals and organizations alike. Knowledgeable competent officials are the cornerstone for the development of lacrosse across the country. It is our hope to continue to develop nationally standardized mechanics, so as teams and officials travel around the country to play and officiate, that they will encounter the same level of officiating and mechanics that ensures safety and fair play.

***David Bagdan***  
***Men's Game Officials Training Group - Chair***  
***2015***

## **DEDICATION**

This manual is dedicated to all officials who will officiate lacrosse games around the country and the world. Their tireless efforts as the Third Team on the Field often go unrecognized.

This manual is also dedicated to the officials who came before us, who paved the way through trial and error to produce positioning and techniques that allow us officials to perform our duties at the highest level possible.

Much hard work on the field and within the US Lacrosse Training Group meetings has gone into this manual.

Good luck, continue to honor the game and thank you for all you do.

## ABOUT THIS MANUAL

This manual mainly focuses on three-person mechanics. However, a majority of the same or similar mechanics are used in two-person mechanics as well. This manual is designed to be a supplement to the US Lacrosse on-line course, classroom and on-field training. It is not the end-all-be-all of lacrosse officiating, but more of a guide and resource for officials to carry with them in their game bag throughout the season.

*The manual is composed of four main sections.*

### Introduction

Resources and information related to all levels of officials. Briefly outlines the training and certification requirements established by US Lacrosse and includes a list of resources established specifically for men’s game officials by US Lacrosse.

### The Game

Follows along directly with the national standard for officiating mechanics and the classroom PowerPoint your local US Lacrosse Certified Trainer will go through annually in your classroom section.

### Game Management

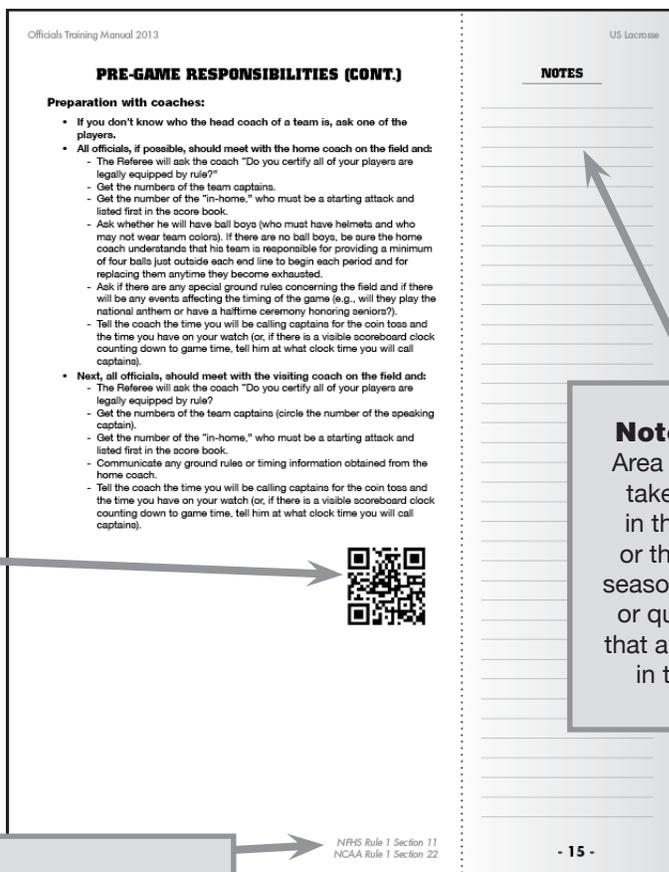
Information and resources that go beyond the basics of officiating covered in “The Game” section of this manual.

### Appendices

Additional resources and information from US Lacrosse that is invaluable to officials of all levels.

### Interactive Layout

The layout of this manual is to assist officials in utilizing this valuable tool throughout their season and career. We have added a notes section, rule references to the three main rule codes, and Quick Response Codes (better known as QR codes) to allow officials to access resources by a simple click or utilizing a free QR code reader on their smartphone.



**Quick Access Code  
(QR Code)**

You can access the link by either clicking on this (if viewing as a PDF on your computer) or by using a free QR Reader on your smartphone.

*NOTE - some QR codes will require logging into your US Lacrosse Central Hub account.*

**Rule Reference Section**

References the US Lacrosse Youth Rules, NFHS and/ or NCAA rules related to the information on the page

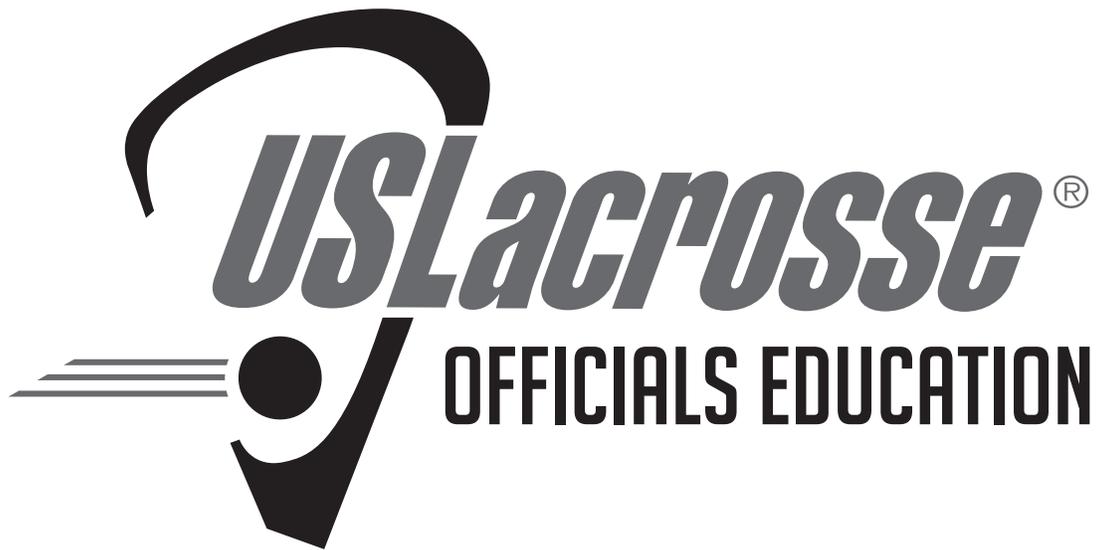
**Notes Section**

Area for officials to take notes while in the classroom or throughout the season as situations or questions arise that are not covered in this manual.

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# **INTRODUCTION**

## US LACROSSE MEN'S GAME OFFICIALS TRAINING

As the sport of lacrosse grows and evolves, so do the rules and mechanical procedures at all levels of the game. The purpose of the US Lacrosse Officials Education and Training Program is to develop knowledgeable and prepared lacrosse officials at every level of the game.

In order to achieve this, officials must:

- **Undergo continued standardized training in order to stay current with the game**
- **Always consider the level of play when officiating**
- **Promote the safety of participants**
- **Promote fair play and sportsmanship**
- **If desired, work to improve their certification level and qualify for higher level games and “move up” to higher levels of officiating**



*Men's Officials  
Information*

US Lacrosse training has been developed – and continues to improve – with these goals in mind.

### Considering Level of Play

The US Lacrosse Education and Training Program is designed with consideration for officiating at different skill levels. While there are many similarities from level to level, from an emphasis on safety and sportsmanship to the mechanics for basic field positioning, there are many important differences, including – but not limited to – the rules. Curriculum guides will be available to certified trainers to guide their instruction by level of play, based on differences in rules, interpretations, and points of emphasis from one level of play to the next. It is important that officials understand and embrace these skill differences when officiating at each level of play.

### Career Progression

Due to the current shortage of officials, career progression in the lacrosse community can be rapid. Officials trained at Levels 1 and/or 2 are sure to find opportunities to officiate youth or scholastic games in their first few years. It takes a few years to develop a strong Level 2 official and usually another few years to develop a strong Level 3 official. Once an official is Level 3 certified, application may be considered for the college ranks. After attaining a college-level ranking, opportunities to officiate post-collegiate club and international lacrosse games await the experienced and dedicated lacrosse official. Opportunities for advancement differ from region to region; ask your local USL Trainer about the requirements for career progression in your district.

### Hands-On Experience

In addition to your local training, US Lacrosse Education and Training Programs provide additional clinic opportunities that take place around the country. Your USL Trainer will share information with you regarding participation in these opportunities. US Lacrosse also sponsors LAREDO (LAcrosse REfreee Development Opportunities) to meet these needs at a more national level. LAREDO utilizes regional lacrosse tournaments and summer lacrosse camps as sites for intense and concentrated lacrosse officiating development. The philosophy behind the LAREDO program is to make these clinics accessible to all lacrosse officials from around the country. This balanced representation enables officials from developing and established areas, to polish their officiating skills under the instruction of a USL Clinician. Your local US Lacrosse training program will prepare you to participate in LAREDO.

**There are distinct advantages to LAREDO training programs:**

- **Officials gain access to appropriate levels of competition when they are ready for advanced training.**
- **New officials can gain additional more advanced two-person experience.**
- **Established officials can upgrade their two and three-person skills through regional lacrosse tournaments, and advanced officials can further polish their techniques by participating in elite tournaments.**
- **The nationwide standardization of mechanics and rules interpretations are reinforced.**
- **Knowledge is multiplied, as officials return to their respective US Lacrosse Districts and share their advanced officiating experiences with their colleagues.**
- **Camaraderie develops as officials interact on national crews.**
- **Officials gain national exposure.**
- **Many opportunities are available to you—please work with your local trainer to find out more about how to maximize your officiating experience and opportunities.**



*US Lacrosse  
LAREDO Programs*

## US LACROSSE MEN'S GAME OFFICIALS TRAINING

- To promote the safety of all parties (players, coaches, bench personnel, officials).
- To promote fair play and sportsmanship.
- To standardize officials mechanics.
- To recruit, train, and retain officials who are providing a safe and fun game experience at every level they officiate.
- To encourage the growth of the sport and to honor the game.

### LEVEL 1

#### Goals and Objectives of US Lacrosse Level 1 Training

US Lacrosse Level 1 training is targeted at officials with little or no experience in officiating men's lacrosse. The goal of Level 1 Training is to introduce officials to the basic rules and mechanics necessary to facilitate a safe and fair game. Level 1 Training is primarily intended to equip officials to work games at the U-15 scholastic level and lower youth levels.

Level 1 training prepares officials to:

- Properly prepare individually and with a partner in advance of contests.
- Maintain a safe playing field at each contest.
- Establish an assertive presence on the field.
- Communicate effectively using voice and hand signals:
  - With a partner.
  - With coaches and the scorer's table.
- Conduct the pre-game coin toss and line-up procedures.
- Understand and correctly demonstrate basic field positioning.
- Correctly identify if a team has possession of the ball in a penalty situation and how to apply the slow whistle technique.
- Understand and recognize differences between personal and technical fouls.
- Recognize and assess safety fouls accurately and fairly.



*Level 1 Certification  
Requirements*

#### Level 1 Certification Requirements

In order to be Certified Level 1 by US Lacrosse, officials must complete the minimum requirements listed below:

- Current "official" member designation with US Lacrosse
- Online Course
- Classroom (8 hours minimum) Best Practice over 3 to 4 Sessions
  - o Three hours minimum focused on mechanics
  - o Five hours minimum focused on rules and lacrosse officiating knowledge
- Field work (no time limit, needs to pass level 1 evaluation) –
  - o Recommended 2 games as a shadow, 2 games being shadowed, and 2 games solo with senior partner. (Evaluation should be done without a shadow)
  - o It may be necessary to evaluate one official multiple times before certification is achieved
  - o Evaluation reported by trainer as completed and passed to US Lacrosse
- Take online and pass the US Lacrosse annual rules test with an 80 or higher

In addition all officials who are Level 1 Certified and wish to remain Level 1 must meet annual recertification requirements in order to maintain their Level 1 Certification. These requirements are:

- Pass the annual US Lacrosse Rules test with an 80 or higher
- Classroom (6 hours minimum)
  - o Two hours minimum focused on mechanics
  - o Four hours minimum focused on rules and lacrosse officiating knowledge

# US LACROSSE MEN'S GAME OFFICIALS TRAINING

## LEVEL 2

### Goals and Objectives of US Lacrosse Level 2 Training

Level 2 training is targeted at men's lacrosse officials with field experience and an understanding of basic rules and mechanics. The goal of Level 2 is to advance officials' knowledge and application of rules, mechanics and game management. Level 2 Training is primarily intended to equip officials to work games at the high school level and lower.

Level 2 training reinforces Level 1 concepts and prepares officials to:

- **Maintain a safe playing field at each contest**
- **Establish a confident, professional and assertive presence on the field**
- **Communicate effectively with a clear, commanding voice and with demonstrative hand signals:**
  - With a partner
  - With players
  - With coaches and the scorer's table
- **Understand and correctly demonstrate advanced field positioning**
- **Correctly perform equipment inspections**
- **Properly enforce the rules regarding 10- and 20-second counts**
- **Apply the stalling rules**
- **Correctly identify which team has possession of the ball in a penalty situation and the sequence of fouls as they occur**
- **Understand, recognize and assess all fouls, including simultaneous fouls and fouls that create an advantage**
- **Recognize advantage/disadvantage in loose ball situations and when the play-on technique is required**
- **Assess all fouls accurately and fairly**



*Level 2 Certification  
Requirements*

### Level 2 Certification Requirements

In order to be Level 2 Certified Trained by US Lacrosse, officials must complete at minimum the requirements listed below:

- **Must have a current Level 1 certification or have met all requirements for Level 1 certification and is being field evaluated for Level 2 certification.**
- **Current "official" member designation with US Lacrosse**
- **Classroom (6 hours minimum)**
  - o Two hours minimum focused on mechanics
  - o Four hours minimum focused on rules and lacrosse officiating knowledge
- **Field work – (no time limit, needs to pass level 2 evaluation)**
  - o Level 2 on-field evaluation
  - o Evaluation reported by trainer as completed and passed to US Lacrosse
  - o It may be necessary to evaluate one official multiple times before certification is achieved.
- **Take online and pass US Lacrosse annual rules test with a 90 or higher.**

Additionally, all officials who are Level 2 Certified Officials and wish to remain Level 2 must meet annual recertification requirements in order to maintain their Level 2 Certification. These requirements are:

- **Take online and pass the US Lacrosse annual rules test with a 90 or higher**
- **Classroom (6 hours minimum)**
  - o Two hours minimum focused on mechanics
  - o Four hours minimum focused on rules and lacrosse officiating knowledge

# US LACROSSE MEN'S GAME OFFICIALS TRAINING

## LEVEL 3

### Goals and Objectives of US Lacrosse Level 3 Training

Level 3 training is targeted at men's lacrosse officials with field experience and officials who are currently Level 2 officials. The goal of Level 3 is to advance officials' knowledge and application of rules, mechanics and game management. Level 3 Training is focused on three-person mechanics and is primarily intended to equip officials to work games at the high school level and prepare them for eventually becoming a collegiate official.

Level 3 training reinforces Level 2 concepts and prepares officials to:

- **Excel at officiating games utilizing three-person mechanics**
- **Focus on advanced game management techniques**
- **Establish a confident, professional and assertive presence on the field**
- **Communicate effectively with a clear, commanding voice and with demonstrative hand signals:**
  - With a partner
  - With players
  - With coaches and the scorer's table
- **Learn how to properly mentor and work with Level 1 and 2 officials as the Crew Chief**
- **Understand, recognize and assess all fouls, including simultaneous fouls and fouls that create an advantage.**

### Level 3 Certification Requirements

- **Current Level 2 certification (official cannot jump from a Level 1 to a Level 3 without first being certified as a Level 2 official)**
- **Current "official" member designation with US Lacrosse**
- **Classroom – 6 hours**
  - o Two hours minimum focused on mechanics
  - o Four hours minimum focused on rules and lacrosse officiating knowledge
- **Field work - (no time limit, needs to pass level 3 evaluation)**
  - o Level 3 on-field evaluation form
  - o Must achieve a score of 80 or higher on the evaluation score
  - o Reported by trainer and reported to US Lacrosse as passed
- **Take online and pass the Us Lacrosse annual rules test with a 90 or above**

In addition, all official who are already Level 3 Certified Officials and wish to remain Level 3 must meet annual recertification requirements in order to maintain their Level 3 Certification. These requirements are:

- **Take online and pass the US Lacrosse annual rules test with a 90 or higher**
- **Classroom (6 hours minimum)**
  - o Two hours minimum focused on mechanics
  - o Four hours minimum focused on rules and lacrosse officiating knowledge
- **Official must have accumulated 20 hours of active participation throughout previous certification year.**
  - o This can be met by games worked, observing Level 1 and 2 officials, conducting local training, mentoring junior officials etc...
  - o LOA can define the exact requirements on how officials can reach the 20 hours using the above examples as a guideline.



*Level 3 Certification  
Requirements*

## **PROFESSIONALISM**

**Being a professional means more than being on time and attired in the correct uniform. Mastering the following areas will help you present yourself professionally:**

**Conditioning:** You must be in shape to meet the demands of the game, in terms of speed and endurance. You can't make the right calls if you can't get into position to make them, or if physical strain is affecting your decision making ability.

**Rules knowledge:** It can take years to fully understand the rules. Continual review of the rules as an official will help you to develop more quickly.

**Mechanics:** Officials need to know more than the rules: they also need to know where to go on the field and what their responsibilities are.

**Game management:** There are many times that officials can keep the game running smoothly without using their flag and whistle. Game management techniques are discussed throughout this manual; master them, and you'll find that officiating becomes much easier.

**Communication:** Communication is a key aspect of game management. Communicate with your partner, the coaches, and the bench personnel in a clear and efficient manner.

**Conduct:** Demonstrate the appropriate demeanor; treat your partner, the table personnel, athletes, and coaches with the respect that you desire to receive. Aloofness, indifference, boredom, and disdain are worse behaviors than nervousness; strive to be engaged at all times.

**Confidence:** Confidence comes from preparation and experience. You must know the rules, interpretations and mechanics in order to be prepared for any situation.

**Focus:** Concentrate on what you are doing, and do not lose your focus on the game. Block out distractions and move on to the next situation that is happening in front of you. Don't let thinking about a call you might have missed interfere with getting the next call right.

**Consistency:** Be the same at both ends of the field, and try to complement your partner by calling fouls at the same threshold.

**Courage:** You must have the courage to do what is right. Whether it's a difficult call or a difficult "no-call," you won't be a successful official without the fortitude to "get it right!"

**Uniform and equipment:** As an official, you should have the proper uniform, and it should be neat and clean. You must also have the proper equipment for your level of play. If you don't, you'll be battling a negative impression from the start.

## UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT

US Lacrosse requires the following uniforms for the corresponding levels of the game. Uniform standards exist to communicate the level of professionalism that officiating associations aspire to maintain. Crew members should coordinate all uniform parts when possible.

College	Scholastic	Youth	<b>Uniform requirements by different levels of the game</b>
✓	✓	✓	Short sleeved shirt: One-inch vertical stripes on the body and sleeves. A black collar and black cuffs are required. Basketball style Referee shirts are prohibited.
✓	✓		Long sleeved shirt: One-inch vertical stripes on the body and sleeves. A black collar and black cuffs are required.
✓	✓	✓	Shorts: Black shorts with 4 pockets and belt loops. A minimum 6-inch inseam is required. If compression shorts are also worn, they must be black and may not extend below the hem of the shorts.
✓	✓	✓	Belt: Black belt, 1-2 inches wide, with a plain silver buckle
✓	✓	✓	Undershirt: All undershirts and turtlenecks are to be solid black.
✓	✓		Reversible Jacket: Solid all-black on one side, vertical stripes on the other.
✓	✓		Long Pants: Solid black nylon pants with zipper leg closures. Sweat pants are not permissible.
✓	✓	✓	Socks: Black “ankle” socks. The sock should cover the ankle bone. “No-show” and “crew socks” are prohibited.
✓	✓	✓	Shoes: Shoes must be all black with black laces.
✓	✓	✓	Hat: Hat must be black with 1/8th inch white piping (a sized or fitted hat is preferred).
✓	✓	✓	Flag Patch: The US Flag Patch is to be worn by all officials at all games (including USILA and MCLA games). This patch is worn centered on the left breast pocket and with the bottom of the patch ¾ inches above that pocket.
	✓	✓	Patch: Officials shall wear the “US Lacrosse Official” patch on the left sleeve for scholastic and youth level games unless directed otherwise by the local association or state association. The top of the patch should be roughly 3 inches down from the shoulder seam.
✓	✓	✓	Whistles: Officials whistles are black in color. A black Fox 40 finger whistle (pea-less) is required for its clarity and power.
✓	✓	✓	Penalty flags: Officials flags are solid gold with a centered weighted portion added in a safe manner. Two flags shall be carried in the front of the uniform, tucked into the waistband of the shorts.
✓	✓	✓	Coin: A coin at least the size of a half-dollar is needed for doing the coin flip.
✓	✓	✓	Tape Measure: All officials must have a pocket tape measure capable of measuring up to 72 inches. Tape measures should be black.
✓	✓	✓	20-second timer: A special 20-second timer for lacrosse officials is required for NFHS and NCAA games.
✓	✓		Equipment Bag: Officials are encouraged to carry their equipment in black bags, which must be neat in appearance.
✓	✓		Gloves: When the weather is cold, officials have the options of wearing black gloves.



*Uniform and Equipment Checklist*



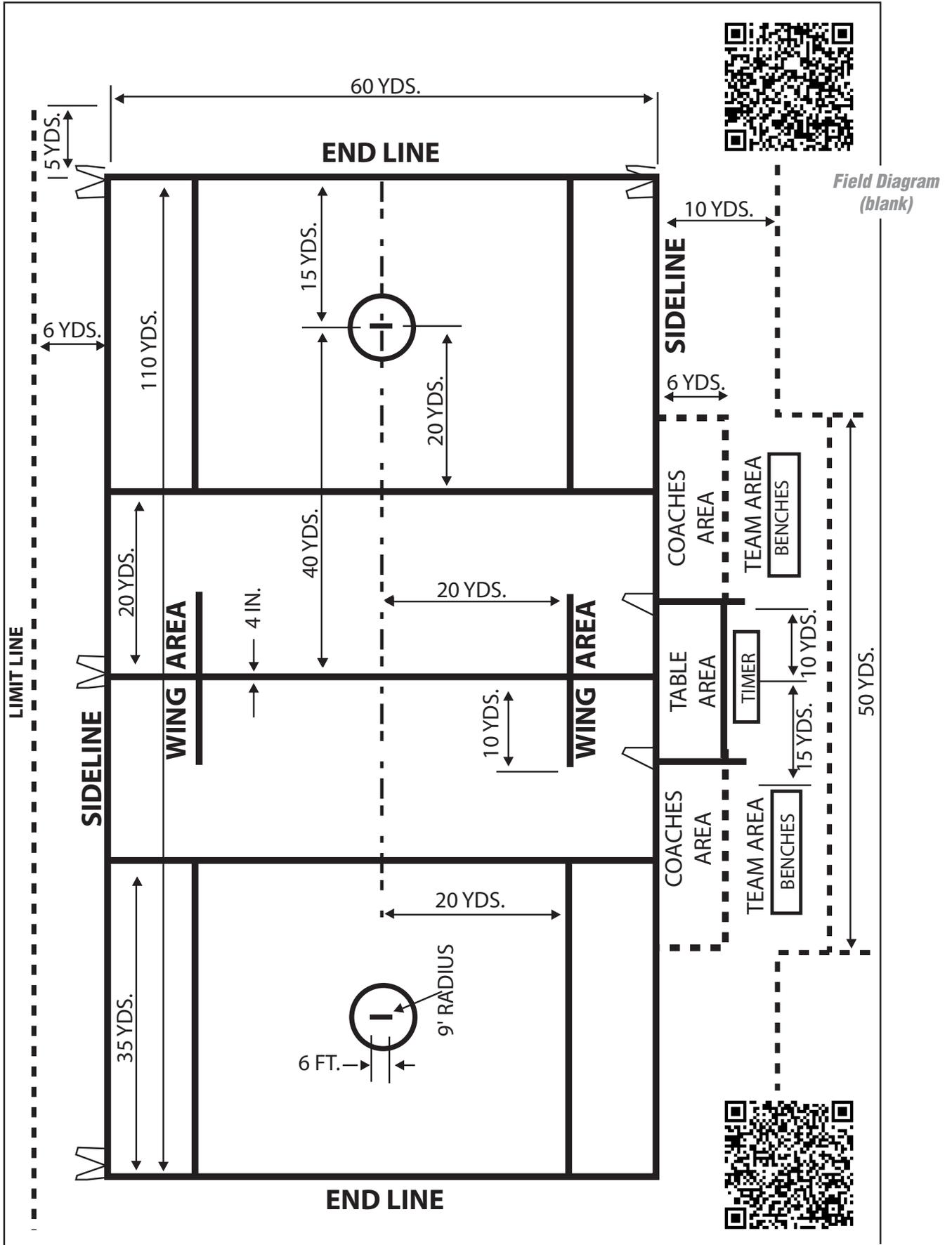


# **THE GAME**

## **GLOSSARY OF OFFICIATING TERMS**

On Official	Official who is watching the action around the ball.
Off Official	Officials who are watching the action away from the ball.
Lead Official	Official who has the goal line and end line responsibility.
Single Official	Far side official who is also responsible for all transition counts except the 4-second crease count.
Trail Official	Stays behind the play, helping to keep the ball between him and his partners. This official also has the 4-second crease count.
Transition Count	Refers to NCAA: 30-second transition count or NFHS: 20-second clearing count and 10-second offensive count.
Goal Area	Defined by the 35-yard by 40-yard rectangle around the goal at the attack end of the field. Attack area is also known as the box.
Goal Line Extended (GLE)	Imaginary line running through goal line to each sideline.
The Alleys	The 10-yard by 35-yard strips on either side of the attack area.
Play-On	Call and mechanic used on loose ball technical fouls. (Exception: some crease violations goalie in possession; some line violations).
Clearing Team	The team attempting to move the ball from the defensive end of the field to its offensive end.
Riding Team	During a clear attempt, the team not in possession of the ball.
In-Home	A starting attack-man. If players listed in the official score book are listed as Attack, Midfield, Defense, Goalkeeper then he is the first attack-man listed. This person must serve all penalties against his team that are not assigned to a specific player or any time serving fouls called against players on the bench or the coaching staff.
Wing Areas	Parallel to the sidelines, 20-yards from the center of the field and extend 10-yards on either side of the midfield line, define this space to the sideline as the wing area.
Player Possession	When a player has control of the ball in his stick so that he is able to perform any of the normal functions of control, such as carrying, cradling, passing or shooting.
Flag Down	A term used by officials to indicate that there will be a time serving foul.
Centerline	The location on the field where all faceoffs occur.

# THE FIELD OF PLAY



Field Diagram (dimensions)





**NOTES**

*Write the name of the timekeeper on your scorecard if you do not know the person.*

**PRE-GAME RESPONSIBILITIES (CONT.)**

**Preparation with table:**

- **Table personnel:**
  - The home team must provide the official timer and the official scorekeeper.
  - Identify who will perform each role.
  - Do they have experience?
    - \* *If they are inexperienced go over their roles and responsibilities*
- **Check clock:**
  - Is it operational?
  - Will the scoreboard clock be used or will the time be kept at the table?
  - Does the timer know how to operate it?
  - If a score board is used, does the score board have an operational horn that goes off at 'zero'?
    - \* *If not, the Referee should explain that the horn should be used when the time gets to 'zero'.*
- **Review:**
  - Start and stop on whistle.
  - Length of quarters.
  - End-of-period procedure.
- **Penalty Clock:**
  - Explain your communications with them.
  - Go over the two conditions of release.
  - Cover "early" release procedures.
- **Horn:**
  - When is a double horn allowed?
  - What if a horn is requested at an improper time?
- **If there is a problem:**
  - Note who has the ball, where the ball is, and what the problem is,
  - Sound a double horn at the next dead ball,
  - The officials will come to the table to sort out the problem.



**NCAA Timer Directions**



**NFHS Timer Directions**



**NCAA Scorer Directions**



**NFHS Scorer Directions**

## PRE-GAME RESPONSIBILITIES (CONT.)

### Preparation with coaches:

- **All officials, if possible, should meet with both coaches, preferably together near the midline of the field and the Referee will:**
  - Ask the coach “Do you certify all of your players are legally equipped by rule?”
  - Get the numbers of the team captains.
  - Get the number of the “in-home,” who must be a starting attack and listed first in the score book.
  - Ask the home team coach if there are any pre-game activities or anything out of the norm that might affect the timing of the game (e.g., will they play the national anthem or have a halftime ceremony honoring seniors?).
  - Ask whether the home coach will have ball boys (who must have helmets and may not wear team colors). If there are no ball boys, be sure the home coach understands that his team is responsible for providing the minimum number of balls according to the rules outside each boundary line to begin each period and for replacing them anytime they become exhausted.
  - Tell the coaches the time you will be calling captains for the coin toss and the time you have on your watch (or, if there is a visible scoreboard clock counting down to game time, tell him at what clock time you will call captains).
  - Ask if either coach has anything further to add.
  
- **Upon completion of the certification and gathering of all necessary information – the Referee delivers the following message:**
  - “We would like to request your assistance in emphasizing sportsmanship today. As officials we are required and will enforce all sportsmanship rules for players, coaches and spectators. Good luck today and have fun.”



*Coaches  
Certification Cards*



*Pre-game  
Responsibilities  
Video*

### NOTES

*If you don't know who the head coaches are look up their names online, or ask one of the players warming up.*





## NOTES

Key Tips:

- Do not be in a rush

- Vary the whistle

## FACEOFFS

If a faceoff is to begin the quarter the officials will rotate so the Referee conducts the first faceoff in the 1st and 4th quarters. If the faceoff is after a goal, the official who was the Lead conducts it.

### The Faceoff Official:

- Holds the ball
- Writes the number of the goal scorer on his scorecard (if there is a goal).
- Looks to the Lead Left official for the “ready” signal (either a point or verbal statement)
- Makes sure the players at center have their backs to their goalie.
- Indicates where the faceoff will take place by placing tip of shoe on the spot along the midline and instructs the players to prepare for the faceoff by saying “down.”
- Visually checks that both players have:
  - o Both hands around the shafts.
  - o All fingers touching the ground.
  - o Hands off the head of the stick.
  - o Sticks parallel to center line.
  - o Sticks up to, but not touching, the center line.
  - o Heads of sticks are vertical and evenly matched.
  - o Entire bodies to the left of the throats of their sticks, so that the neutral zone is clear.
- May physically adjust the players’ positioning (including crosses).
- Places the ball on the ground, in between the head of each crosse.
- Gives “Set” command with his hand on or near the ball or crosses.
- Backs away and sounds the whistle while concentrating on the faceoff players’ actions, moving with the play as necessary.

### The Lead Left Official:

- Takes a position diagonally across from the faceoff official and leading to his left (the goal he is responsible for).
  - o Adjusts positioning to or further from Center “X” depending upon team’s faceoff tendencies, positioning of wing midfielders on his half of the field, and his own mobility.
- Writes the number of the goal scorer on his scorecard (if there’s a goal).
- Once the bench side wing official gives the “ready” signal give the same signal to the faceoff official when ready.
- May verbally instruct players or inform the faceoff official of any incorrect player position. Should not physically move players.
- Watches for pre-and post-whistle faceoff violations and makes those calls if he sees a violation.
- Covers goal if the ball comes toward his half of the field.

## FACEOFFS (CONTINUED)

### Faceoff Violations

- Pre-whistle – the official first witnessing the violation stands the players up without a whistle, signals and states the violation.
- Post-whistle – the official first witnessing the violation blows the whistle immediately, and signals and states the violation.
- The Faceoff Official will always restart play and take the count.

### The Bench Side Wing Official

- Pumps fist and starts timer when faceoff official reaches Center “X”
- Takes a position at or near the top of the attack box on his half of the field.
- Writes the number of the goal scorer on his scorecard (if there’s a goal).
- Alerts his partners of any man-down situation, and advises the timekeeper to not release any penalties until possession is declared.
- Gives the “ready” signal to the F/O and LL by pointing to the goal he is covering when player count is correct.
- Turns off the timer when the faceoff players go down.
- Watches for wing midfielders leaving too soon and any interference away from the faceoff.

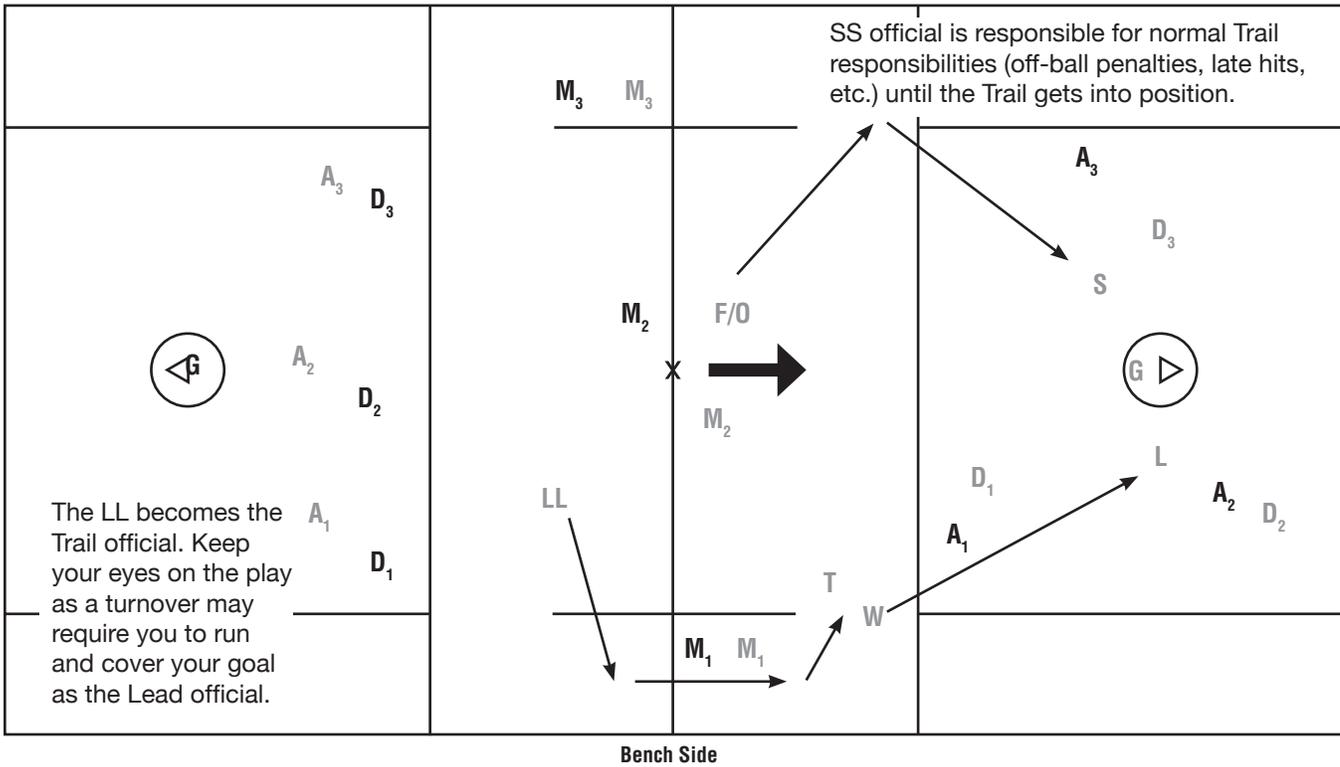
### Possession and Play:

- If a player gains possession of the ball the official witnessing it first will wind his arm backwards and yell “Possession!”
- The other officials will echo their partner’s call when it is made by winding their arms backward and yelling “Possession!” (this is so the entire field knows that the faceoff is over).
- Once possession is established the Single takes the transition count.
- If a loose ball crosses the restraining line the official witnessing it first will wind his arm backwards and yell “Play,” and the other officials will echo the call and the signal.

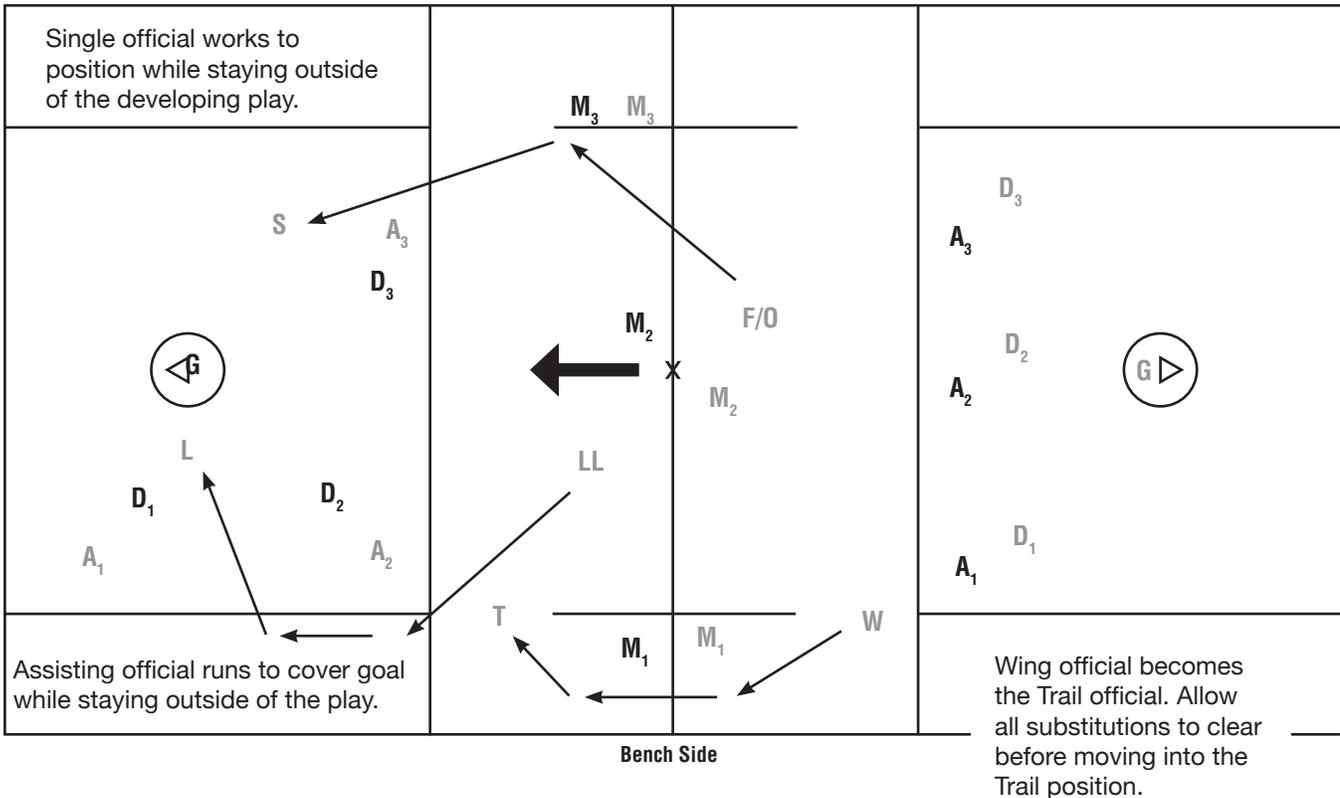
### NOTES

*Be sure there is clear possession! If you release the players early you could have a scrum of 12 players instead of 6*

**Faceoff Ball goes away from LL**



**Faceoff Ball goes towards LL**



## SETTLED SITUATIONS

The key to proper coverage during settled play is to maintain a wide triangle, which allows the crew to keep the play in their lines of vision. Each position has specific responsibilities, and each has backup responsibilities as well, in the event that the primary official is unable to make the call.

As in two-person mechanics, there are dynamic responsibilities based upon which official is the “on” official, usually the official closest to the ball. In three-person mechanics, it is expected that the “on” official covers the ball/ball carrier, while one partner covers action behind the play (e.g., late hits), while the other partner is looking ahead of the play for the next cut, next slide. Specific responsibilities are highly dependent upon game situations and good teamwork is essential to covering the field.

### The Lead:

- Has the goal as the primary responsibility.
- Should start on goal line extended (GLE) and work for the best angle to see the goal line, net and ball.
- Should move in and out with the flow of the players and the ball and above and below GLE.
- Should stay as close to the goal as possible without interfering with the play and should never let players get behind him.
- Responsible for contested plays at or near the end line, and should follow the play to get the best view.
- Has end line responsibility on any shot (chases shots to the end line!).

### The Single:

- Primary responsibility is the action in front of the crease.
- Responsible for watching for late hits after the shot.
- Responsible for the far sideline and all transition counts.
- Covers the goal by moving towards GLE if the Lead moves towards the end line to follow play.
- Should stay a few yards above goal line extended and move in and out without interfering with play and should never let players get behind him.

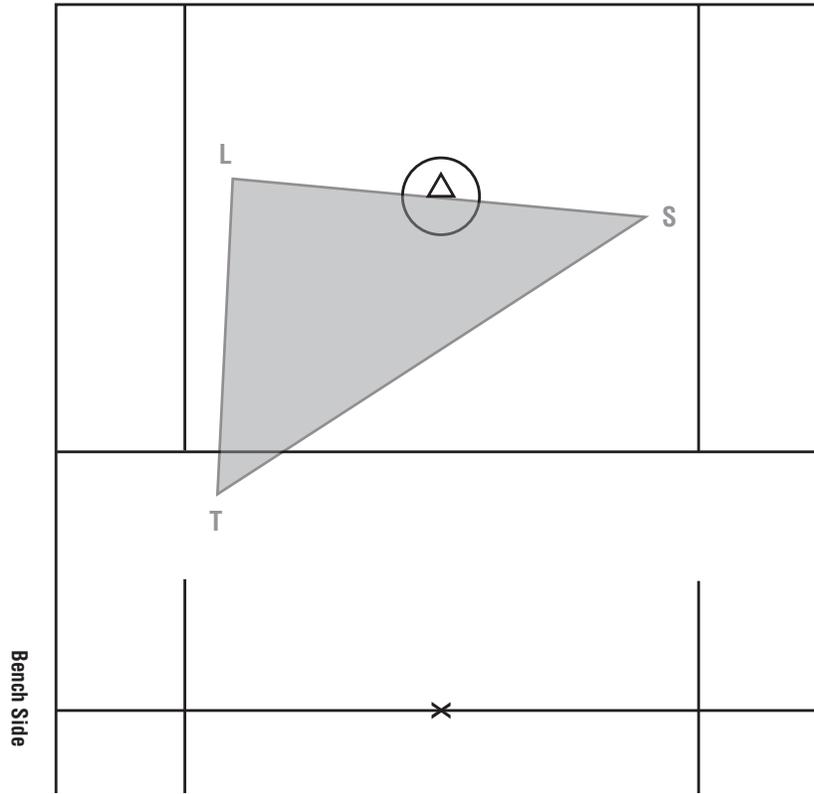
### The Trail:

- Responsible for watching for late hits after the shot.
- Should stay just inside the wing area a few yards above the top of the attack box.
- Responsible for the bench sideline and relaying all time-serving penalties to the table area.
- Watches the high crease area, especially one on one midfield play and picks above crease.
- Covers the midline for offside or other infractions when a loose ball approaches that area.
  - In this situation the Single MUST move up to release the Trail for transition.
  - See single position in “stretched coverage” diagram on next page.

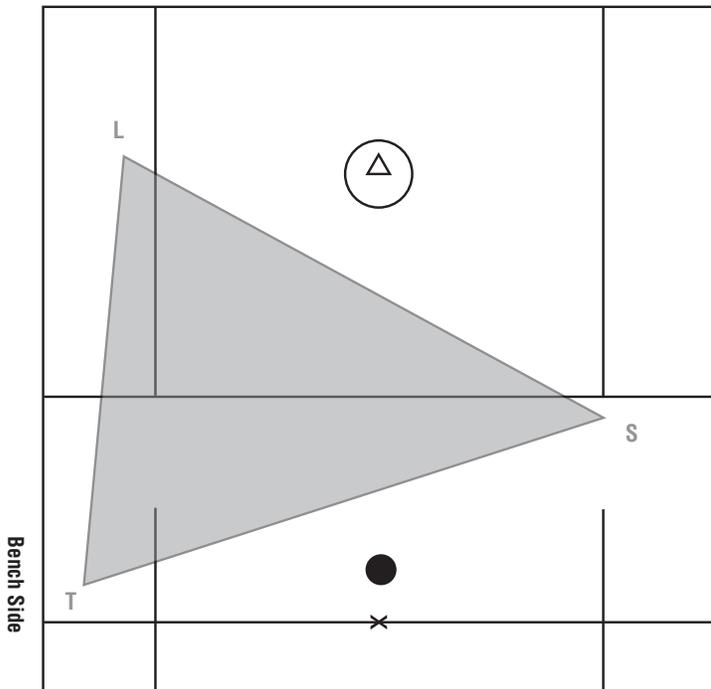
## NOTES

*Never let the ball get behind you. Anticipate where the ball will be passed to next so you can back up from a play coming at you.*

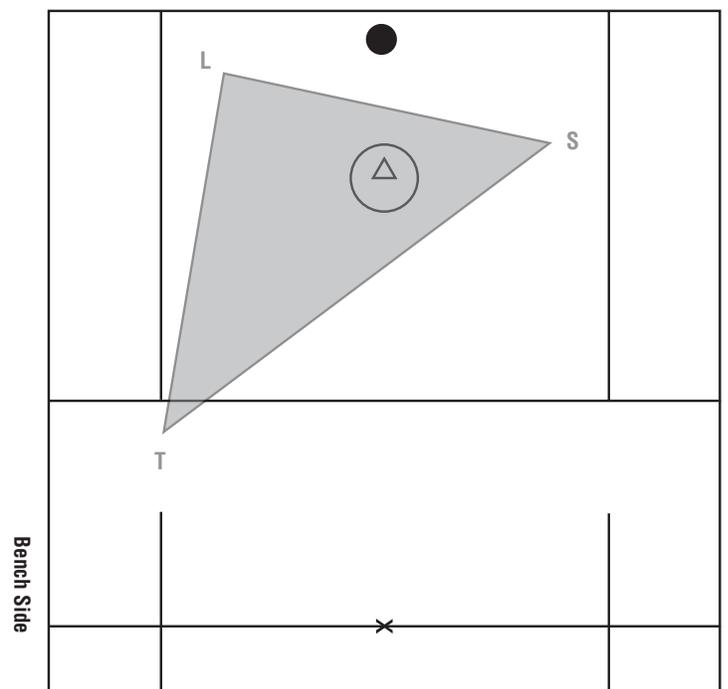
### Settled Coverage



### Ball Near Midline



### Ball Near End Line



## STOPPING AND STARTING PLAY

### To stop play:

- Each official is responsible for blowing the whistle if the ball (or the player in possession) goes out of bounds on the boundary line they are responsible for.
- When there is a play-on, the official calling the play-on is responsible for blowing the whistle to stop play if necessary.
- For a foul by the offense, the official witnessing the foul blows the whistle to stop play.
- When there is a flag down, any official noticing a condition for ending the slow-whistle situation blows the whistle to stop play.
- When a goal is scored, only the Lead should blow the whistle (unless the Lead does not see the goal and the Single does).

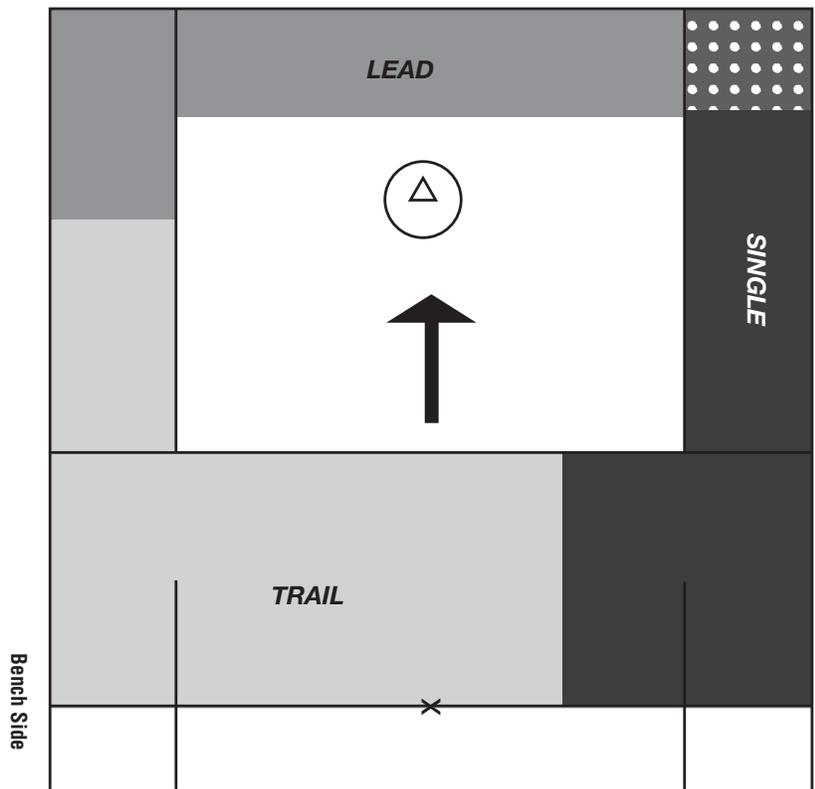
### To restart play:

- Make sure that the player in possession is standing on the field, at least one yard in front of the sideline or 5 yards in from the sideline if he is within 10 yards of the midline.
- A quick restart (don't have to count players) is different for NFHS and NCAA. Review the rule references below and note the differences. A slow restart (always have to count players) is the same.
- If the ball is leaving the Trail's half of the field, the Trail will always have the whistle to restart play. If the ball is on the far side of the field the Single should hold one arm up until the player in possession is in bounds and out of the attack area; then the Single points in the direction of play. The Trail blows the whistle and the Single has the transition count.
- If the ball is in the offensive end and is:
  - Coming in from the bench sideline and below the restraining line, the Lead restarts play.
  - Coming in from the bench sideline and above the restraining line, the Trail official restarts play.
  - Coming in from the far sideline, the Single restarts play.
  - Starting on the end line in the attack area or in the Lead's alley, the Lead restarts play. Some Referees prefer to have the Single restart play on the end line in his alley; this should be covered in the pregame.
- The officials should make eye contact before most restarts to make sure they are ready – and in cases where it is questionable which official should whistle – to determine who is restarting play. If you want the whistle, point to yourself; otherwise, point to your partner.

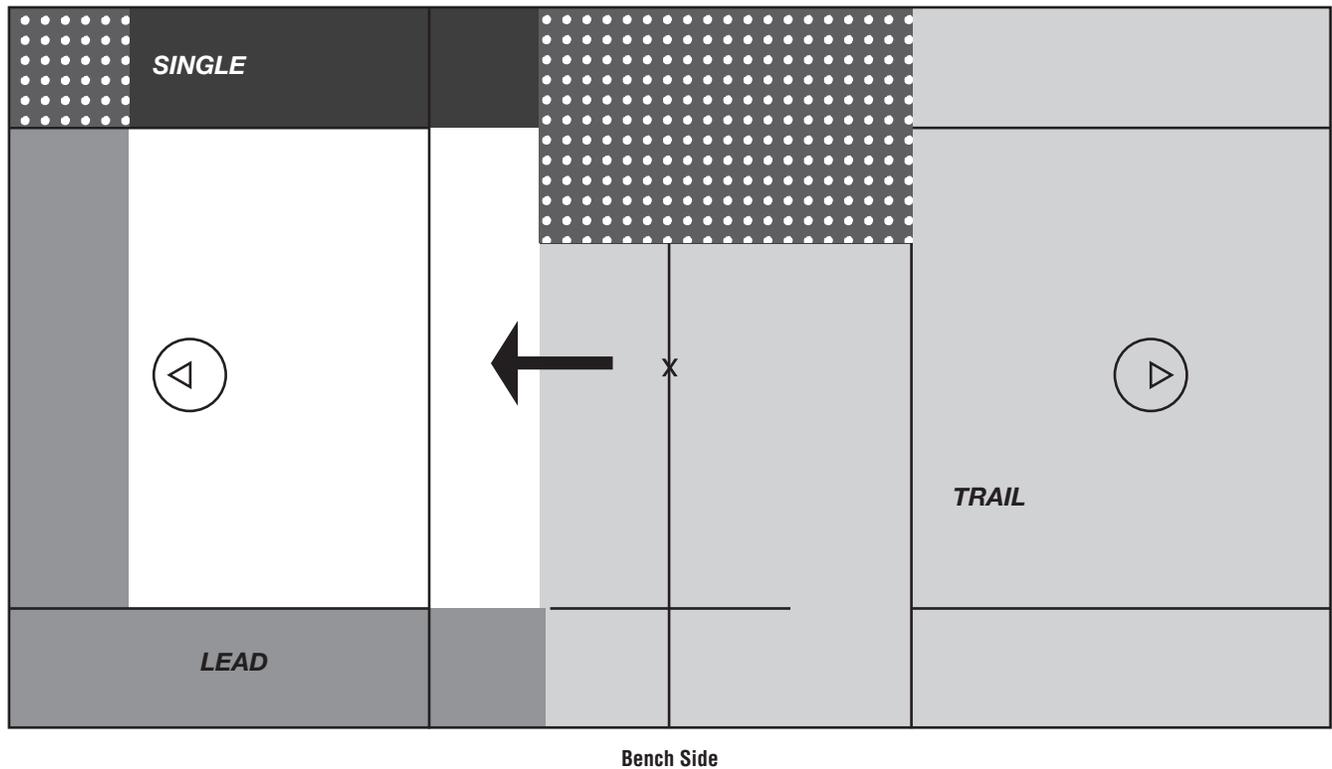
## NOTES

*Count both teams before every slow restart.*

### Restarts - Settled Situations



### Restarts - Transition







## DEEP RESTARTS

### The Lead:

- Has primary responsibility of covering his goal.
- Sets an initial position based on a variety of factors (e.g. the game situation, the teams' tendencies, the players' skills, his own mobility), but he will normally start at or near GLE.
- Must maintain visual communication with the Single (use hand signals).
- Signal "ready" when the field is ready.

### The Single:

- Has primary responsibility of covering the midline for offside and the transition count.
- Is positioned at the far cone straddling the midline and holds the position until the ball passes him (does not stop at midline on a fast break).
- Must maintain visual communication with the Lead and the Trail (Single is the quarterback for relaying "ready" signals to his partners).

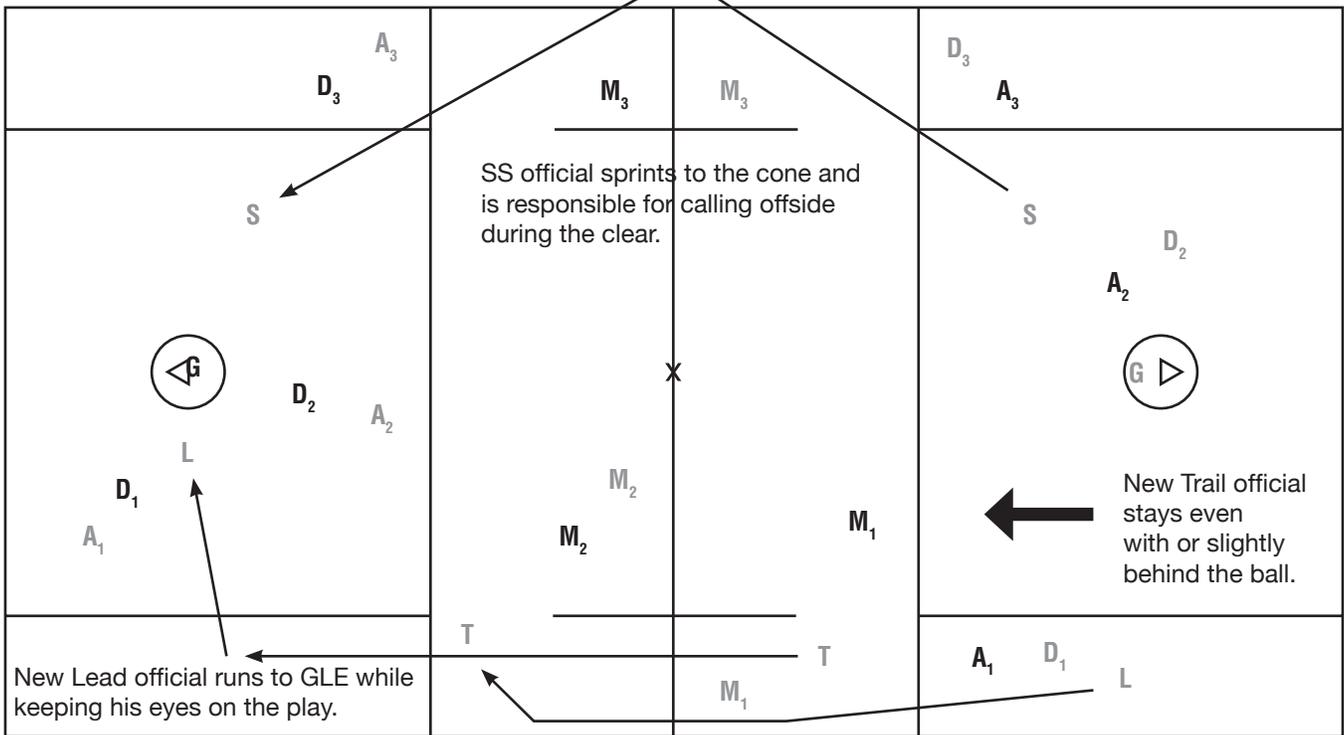
### The Trail:

- Restarts the play, positioned according to where the play is likely to be contested.
- Is responsible for the 4-second count on the goalie.
- Moves up the field with, but not ahead of, the ball in order to cover his goal if there is a turnover.
- Is responsible for late offside calls and checking that players are properly substituting after the ball crosses the midline.
- Must maintain visual communication with the Single (use hand signals).

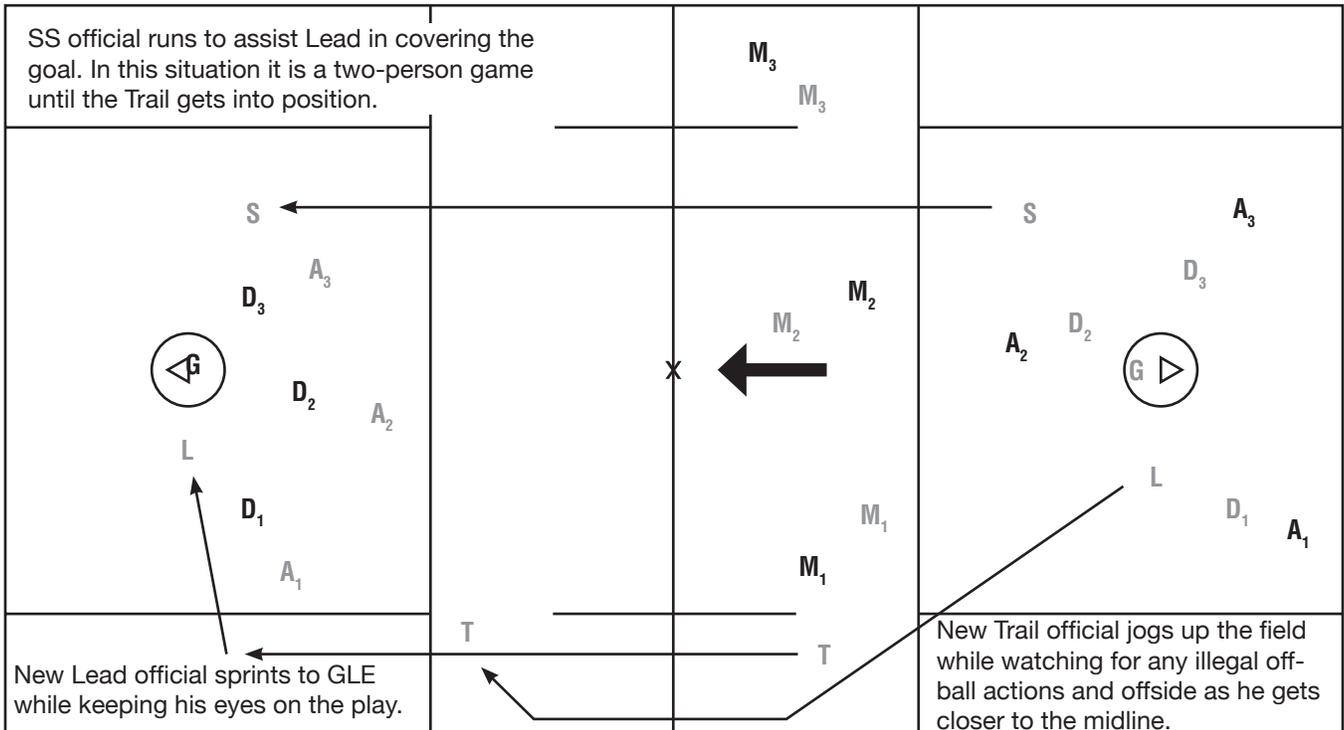
## NOTES

*Count forward when  
determining offside*

**Transition Slow Break**



**Transition Fast Break**



## PENALTY ENFORCEMENT

Once you have determined that a foul has been committed, you must determine which of the following situations you are in:

- For loose-ball technical fouls (and also for most goalkeeper interference and crease violation fouls even if the ball is not loose), you will either employ the play-on technique or whistle immediately.
- For a foul by Team B when Team A has the ball yell “Flag down” and throw your flag straight into the air without blowing your whistle. Team A will have a chance to complete the scoring opportunity. Play stops when Team A scores a goal or when the rules require the official to whistle and stop play.
- For a foul by the team in possession, or for any loose-ball personal foul, blow your whistle immediately.

### Once you sound the whistle, you should:

- Make sure the play is completed, including any dead-ball residue.
- Gather your thoughts.
- Check for flags from your partners. If there are multiple flags, determine if you have flags for the same foul or flags for two different fouls.
- The Trail official should report the penalty while the other officials set up the field for play.
- Position yourself with a clear view of the table along the wing line:
  - Set your feet before reporting and do not rush
- Signal the penalty using ‘C-NOTE’
  - Color, Number, Offense, Time, Explanation (if necessary)
- Ex. “Blue, 27, Slashing, 1-minute”
- After reporting turn your 20-second timer on for man-up/man-down substitutions.

### Enforcement after a slow whistle:

- A player that has committed a personal foul will always be suspended from the game whether or not a goal was scored during the slow whistle.
- A player that has committed a technical foul will not be suspended from the game if a goal was scored during the slow whistle.

### Live Ball Fouls

Live ball fouls are ones committed during the play of the game. There are four possible scenarios, since there are both personal and technical fouls that can be committed during possession by either team or during a loose ball.

Personal and Technical fouls with possession by the team that was fouled:

- **ALWAYS use the slow whistle technique**
  - Throw the flag straight up into the air,
  - Yell “Flag down” AND allow the offensive team (with possession) to complete their play,
- Sound your whistle to stop play when the rules require you to do so,
- Make certain all residual action among the players has ceased,
- Report number of player and type of foul to your partners and the field,
- Relay penalty to the table, and restart play.

## NOTES

*Relay your calls to your partners so everyone knows what to expect for the next restart.*

*When your partner says 'flag down!' repeat the call so the entire field knows that a flag has been thrown.*

**NOTES****PENALTY ENFORCEMENT (CONTINUED)**

Technical fouls during a loose ball:

- Use the “play-on” mechanic if appropriate,
- Sound your whistle to stop play if necessary,
- Make certain all residual action among the players has ceased,
- Announce foul, signal possession, and restart play.

Technical fouls with possession by the team committing the foul:

- Sound your whistle to stop play and make certain all residual action has ceased,
- Announce foul, signal possession, and restart play.

Personal fouls during a loose ball and personal fouls by the team in possession:

- Sound your whistle immediately to stop play,
- Throw the flag straight up into the air,
- Make certain all residual action among the players has ceased,
- Report number of player and type of foul to your partners and the field,
- Relay penalty to the table, and restart play.

**Dead Ball Fouls**

Dead ball fouls are ones committed after play has been stopped (goal scored, time out, period ends, whistle sounds for any reason), or after an action requiring a whistle occurs. There are four possible scenarios.

Personal foul by either team:

- Throw flag straight up into the air,
- Make certain that all residual action among the players has ceased,
- Report number of player and type of foul to your partners and the field,
- Relay penalty to the table, and restart play.

Technical foul with neither team entitled to possession (after goal scored):

- Signal violation, signal possession, and restart play.

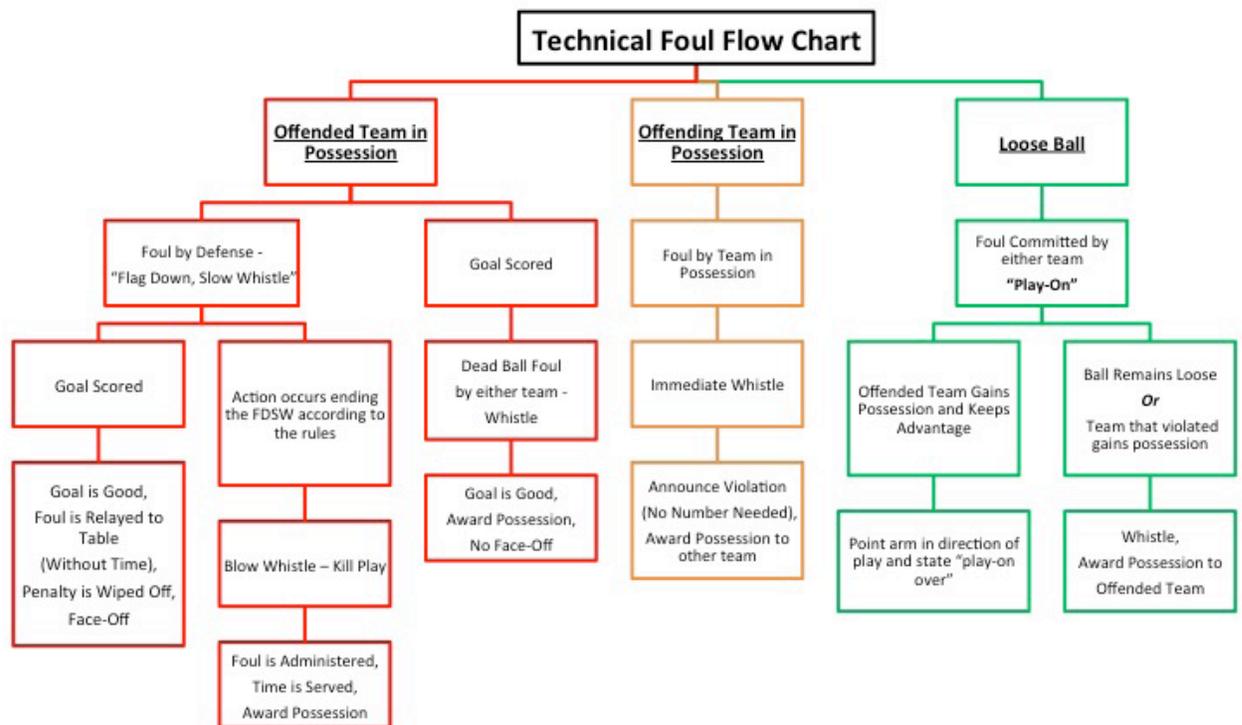
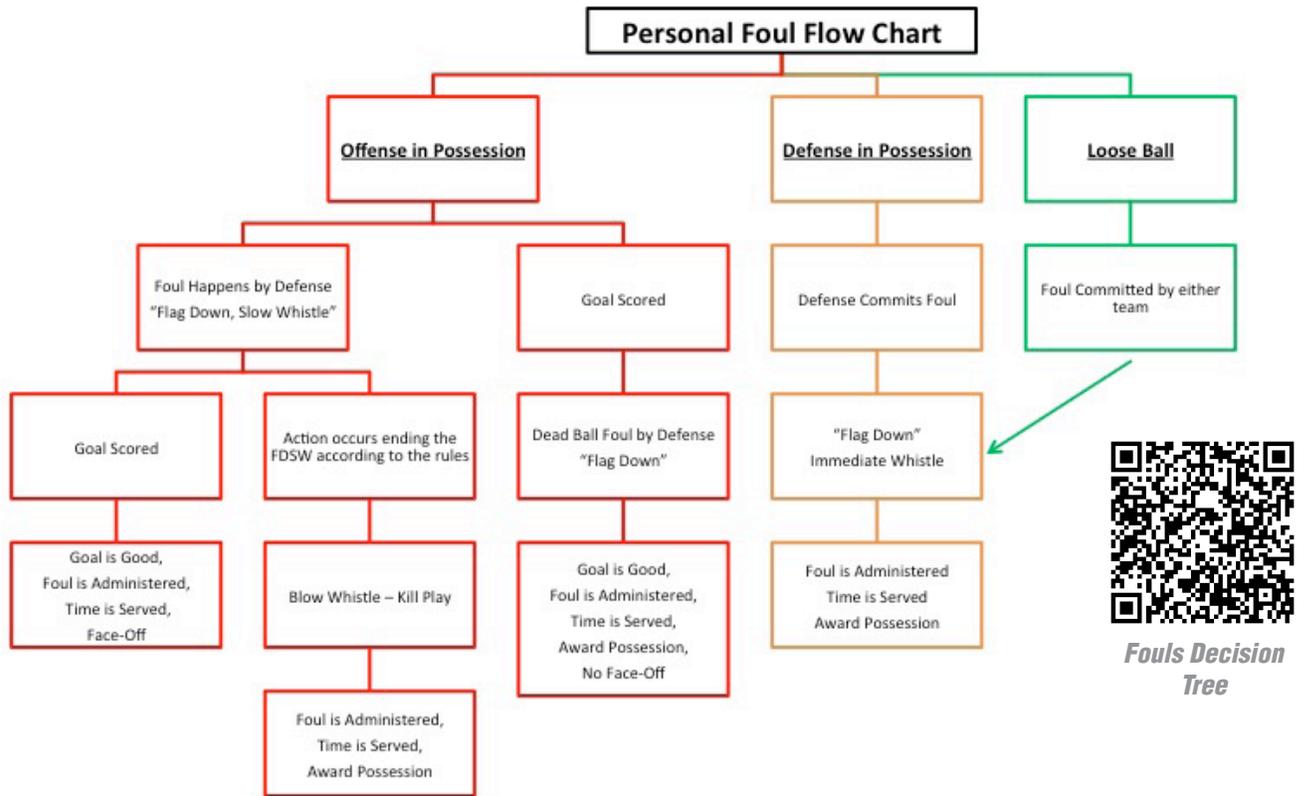
Technical foul by the team entitled to possession:

- Signal violation, signal possession, and restart play.

Technical foul by the team not entitled to possession:

- Throw flag straight up into the air,
- Report number of player and type of foul to your partners and the field,
- Relay penalty to the table, and restart play.

# FOULS DECISION TREE



## NOTES

*Keep the play-on short.  
If no immediate advantage  
or disadvantage you  
should stop the play  
immediately.*

## PLAY-ON

### Play-on technique

If a player commits a loose-ball technical foul or crease violation and the offended player's team may be disadvantaged by the immediate suspension of play, the official shall visually and verbally signal "Play-on." The whistle shall be withheld until the play ends or advantage is gained or lost.

The play-on is intended to allow the game to flow. It makes no sense to stop the game for a loose-ball technical foul and then award possession to the team that would have gained possession anyway. This is particularly true if the team that was fouled had an opportunity to start a fast break. When the ball is loose outside the crease:

- **If one team has an opportunity to gain a clean possession and the other team commits a technical foul, use the play-on technique.**
- **If one team is about to gain possession and the other team commits a technical foul or line violation, but the team gaining possession would quickly be disadvantaged by going out of bounds or being trapped by opposing players, sound an immediate whistle.**

### Enforcement of play-on

The play-on technique allows play to continue if the fouled team is not disadvantaged by ongoing play; this improves the flow of the game by reducing the number of stoppages. The play-on technique should only be used when it is advantageous to the team that was fouled.

When a play-on is appropriate for a loose-ball foul (and some crease violations and goalkeeper interference penalties with possession), the official shall raise one hand overhead and yell "Play on!" For a typical loose-ball foul, the whistle will be withheld until:

- **Several seconds pass with neither team gaining possession.**
- **The team that committed the foul gains possession.**
- **The team that was initially fouled commits a foul.**
- **Any other action occurs that requires the officials to blow the whistle.**

Once the whistle is blown, the official signals the loose-ball foul and awards possession to the team that was fouled to begin the play-on. However, if the fouled team is able to gain possession, the play-on is over and play continues without a stoppage. When this happens, the official should drop the raised arm, and point in the direction of the play and simultaneously state "[team color] ball!" so that everyone knows the play-on situation is over." Ex. "Blue ball," while pointing in the direction that the blue team is attacking.

## EQUIPMENT CHECKS

Whether a check is being conducted at the request of the opposing coach or as a result of a routine inspection, the crosse inspection procedure is identical. Both must be done during a dead-ball situation. You must always verify all aspects of the player's equipment and crosse if the coach requests an inspection.

- **Go to the player whose crosse you've been requested to, or have decided to check. Identify him by number and ask for his crosse.**
- **He may not touch the strings or jam the head once you have requested his crosse. If he seems about to do either, caution him not to; if he does so anyway, assess a 1-minute non-releasable unsportsmanlike conduct penalty and continue with the inspection.**
- **Any attempt by the goal scorer to adjust the pocket depth using a drawstring after a goal will be penalized with a 1-minute unsportsmanlike conduct penalty and the goal will be disallowed, even if the adjustment occurs before the official asks for the crosse.**
- **For coach requested checks (and for routine checks under NFHS rules), quickly check to make sure the player has a legal mouth guard, shoulder pads, arm pads, gloves (palms and fingers cannot be cut out), helmet, and cleats. If any required gear is illegal or missing, he receives a 1-minute non-releasable personal foul penalty.**
- **Take the crosse and move away from the player being inspected.**
- **Use the game ball to check the first three aspects of the crosse:**
  - Place (don't jam) the ball into the pocket and hold the crosse parallel to the ground at eye level. If you can see the top of the ball beneath the bottom of the sidewall, the pocket is illegal
  - Again, place the ball into the pocket and rotate the crosse slowly forward from a vertical orientation to verify the ball freely rolls out of the crosse.
  - Finally, place the ball into the pocket and rotate the crosse slowly forward from a horizontal orientation to verify the ball rolls out of the top end of the crosse.
- **Next, use your tape measure to check the measurements:**
  - Measure the total length of the crosse along the handle from end of the stick to the very end of the head.
  - Measure the inside edges of the head at its widest point.
  - Measure the length of the inside of the head from plastic to plastic.
  - Measure the length from the top of the head to the shooting strings.

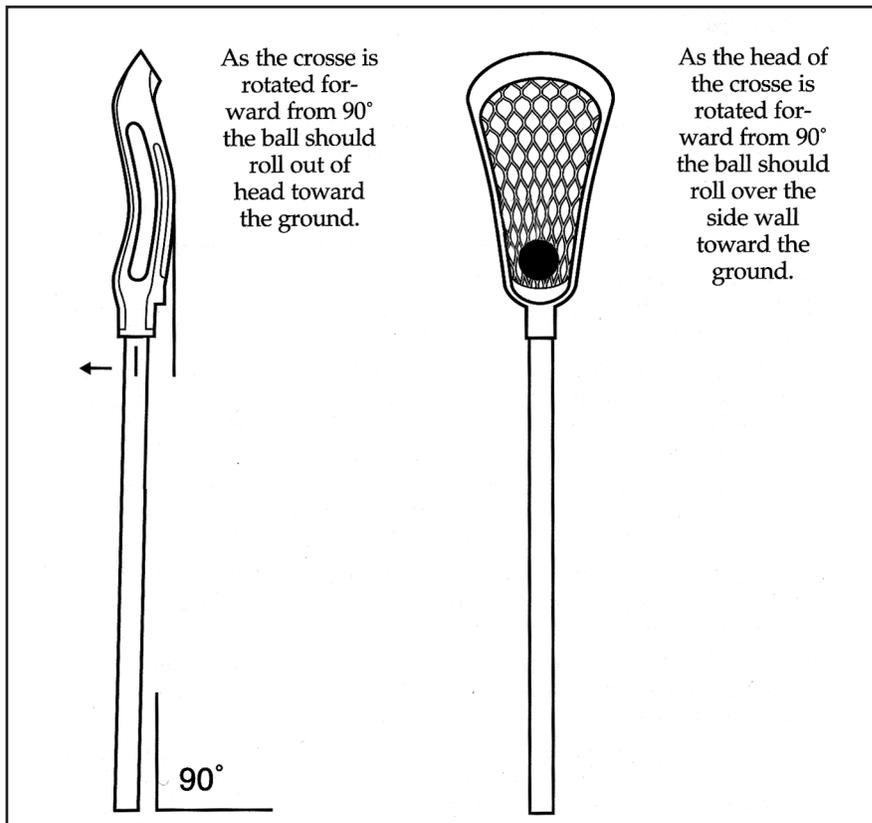
## NOTES

*Umpire and Field Judge  
face the benches.*

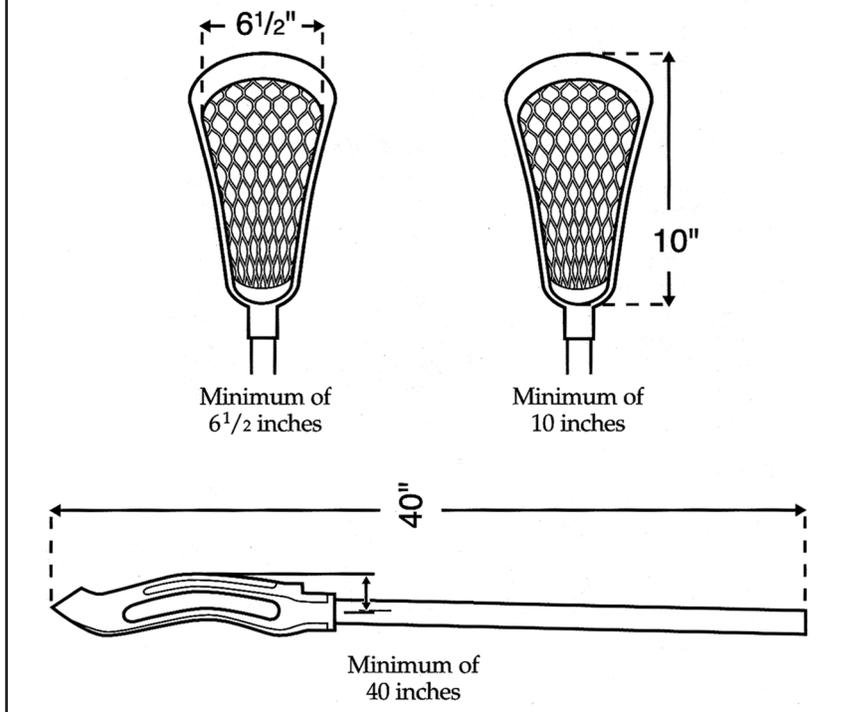
**NOTES**

*Practice until you can check a crosse in under 30 seconds.*

**EQUIPMENT CHECKS (CONT.)**



The following illustrations show how officials conduct stick checks to determine the legality of crosses regarding dislodgement of the ball and minimum dimensions.





## NOTES

*The bench-side official should get to the wing line to watch the player crossover.*

## TIME OUTS

### Official Timeouts

- An official may suspend play at any time at his discretion for any reason he deems necessary for the proper enforcement of the rules or conduct of the game including issues with the players, coaches, spectators, table, field or weather. The Referee should notify the other officials, table and both coaches as to the reason for the game stoppage.
- Loss of Equipment – the official will stop play and allow the offensive player to fix the equipment issue and re-start outside the attack box. If the player is behind the ball, the player can fix the equipment issue or substitute for another player that is fully equipped.
- Injured player – the official will stop play if the injured player is in the play or in the attack area. If the official deems the injury to be serious, he will stop play immediately. The official closest to the player should approach, but should not touch or assist the player. The official nearest the bench should notify the coaching staff/trainer. If the uniform has blood on it that cannot be removed, he may change numbers as long as the table and other team are notified. An official timeout due to a player injury will not be charged a timeout.
- Concussions – any player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional. Also note the NFHS Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion, in the NFHS Rule Book.
- Mistakes by an official should be corrected as quickly as possible. The Referee should correct the mistake, notify the table and coaches. The Referee must also allow or disallow the goal depending on the circumstances.
- If a player, coach, spectator or any other person is ejected from the game and needs to be removed from the premises. The Referee will be in contact with the Game Administrator and, if necessary, security and/or law enforcement. The other official will monitor the field and have the ball ready for restart.

### Team/Player Timeouts

- During a play a timeout may be called by a team on the field or head coach according to the when the rules permit. The official nearest the person calling the timeout (usually the Trail) should stop play and then notify the table and start his timer. The Trail should also position himself near the substitution box to prevent any player issues while the other officials are getting the ball ready for play. The official should then confer with the table to verify the remaining timeouts for the teams and confirm with the other official.
- At 1 minute and 40 seconds, the bench official (who will be Trail for the restart) should blow whistle for the teams to return to the field and start the timer.
- Coaches and teams should remain in their respective coaching areas and not come onto the field during the timeout.
- Each team is allowed one illegal equipment request per game and will not be charged a team timeout; if the equipment is found to be illegal which also allows the team to have another illegal equipment check during the game or if the illegal equipment check is found to be legal the first equipment check.
- Each team can call for a double horn at a dead ball situation and request a count of the long poles on the field. If the head coach makes a second request where the long poles were correct, the team is penalized.

# FIGHT PROCEDURES

## Fight mechanics

- **The “on” official nearest the incident:**
  - Tries to clear other players from the altercation.
  - Attempts to break up the fight by giving verbal commands and blowing the whistle repeatedly.
  - Verbally warns other players not to get involved, even as “peacemakers”
  - Tries to remember the color and numbers of all players involved and, if possible, the sequence of involvement.
- **The closest “off” official:**
  - Gets to the area near the fight as soon as possible and assists the “on” official in keeping players on the field from getting involved.
  - Should note the numbers of players in the fight or entering the fight and write them on his card, if necessary.
- **The furthest “off” official:**
  - Takes a position on the field in front of the benches.
  - Directs coaches to keep their players and fans off the field, “Freezes the benches.”
  - Record the numbers of any players entering the field from the bench area and mentally notes which coaches enter the field.
- **After the incident:**
  - Send all players to the bench area.
  - Direct coaches to get their players together, and get them under control.
  - Take a deep breath, and be sure to look calm and in control.
  - Take your time. Don’t feel rushed to get the game under way until you have completed all of the following steps completely.
  - Meet with other officials to determine the fouls and sequence while continuing to observe the field and the players.
  - Meet with the scorer before announcing penalties to provide time to record penalties and clearly define who will be on the field for the restart.
  - Announce penalties (mandatory expulsion with 3 minutes of non-releasable penalty time for striking another person or leaving the bench area; other penalties discretionary).
  - Clearly communicate your expectations about behavior to both benches and to players in the penalty area. Warn both teams that the game is in danger of being terminated.
  - Feel free to terminate the game if you feel absolute control cannot be regained.
- **After the game:**
  - Prepare written report, including the game conditions, the players involved, a description of the incident, and the resulting penalties.
  - Call your assignor; review the incident.
  - In all communication regarding any expulsion or incident, limit your remarks to the facts at hand and what you saw. For example, “Blue number 32 kicked White number 10 (who was lying on the ground) in the chest” speaks only to the facts of the incident. Do not say something like “Blue number 32, who is a dirty player and who is always causing trouble, was angry because White number 10 had just scored a goal, so he kicked him to try to get even,” which is filled with opinion and speculation.
  - Send DRAFT of game report to your partner and your assignor to check for accuracy, facts, etc... BEFORE submitting official game report.

## NOTES

*Get big and loud to freeze the benches.*

*Don't rush to restart play after a fight.*

**NOTES****POST-GAME****Debriefing, Lessons Learned and Improving Your Game**

Officials can't learn from mistakes unless mistakes are made. You will make plenty of them as you learn how to officiate the game. The trick is not to repeat them. But because mistakes are a part of the game, you will want to learn as much as you can from these errors. Post-game analysis is often difficult to conduct immediately after the game, when people have to get back to their families or other obligations. Some suggestions:

- **You can control the kind and the amount of feedback that you get by the way that you react to the information that you've requested. If you request feedback, be open to it and listen to what is said rather than challenge the people who you ask to assist you.**
- **Rather than just asking how you did, ask specific questions. Here is a sample dialogue: "Do you remember that illegal body check call that I had in the third quarter? What did you have? Tell me why you would or wouldn't have made that call."**
- **Propose going somewhere to buy your officiating partner a soda, even if it is to a gas station on the way out of town. Then you can take a few minutes to clear the air regarding the game.**
- **Ask permission to call your officiating partner at night to discuss.**
- **If you have a mentor, be sure to check in with this senior official for feedback.**
- **Keep reading the rule book, focusing on Rules 4, 5, and 6 (and also the "play on" and "slow whistle" portions of rule 7). As you do this, you'll continually find situations that you saw in your games and didn't know how to handle. Be sure to read the situations in the rule books as well as the rules themselves.**
- **Continue your officiating education regularly through your local officiating organization and practice, practice, practice!**

## ARM SIGNALS

DIAGRAM	OFFICIAL'S MOTIONS	PERSONAL FOULS
	<p><b>PERSONAL FOULS</b>                      Personal fouls are those of a serious nature and will result in a man advantage. The emphasis on safety and sportsmanship in youth lacrosse is expressed in stricter enforcement of personal fouls. Official points index finger upwards and blows whistle</p>	<p>An offending player's team will be a man down while he serves his penalty in the penalty box. A personal foul can be one, two, or three minutes, depending on the official's judgment of the severity and perceived intent of the foul. Fouled team will be given possession.</p>
	<p><b>ILLEGAL BODY CHECK</b>                      Elbow is brought horizontal to shoulder with hand on chest and then moved up-and-down                      NO body checking of any kind permitted in U9 and U11                      Take-out checks NOT ALLOWED at any level, ever!</p>	<p>Fouls will be called for a body check:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• of an opponent without possession of the ball or more than 3 yards from a loose ball.</li> <li>• delivered without 2 hands on the stick</li> <li>• avoidable hit on opponent who's already passed or shot the ball.</li> <li>• to a player from behind, below the waist or above the shoulders, including following through to head.</li> <li>• to a player with any body part other than their feet on the ground.</li> <li>• initiated with the head, also known as spearing and assessed a non-releasable penalty.</li> <li>• considered more aggressive than necessary to knock to the ground, injure the player or made in a reckless or intimidating manner.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>CROSS-CHECK</b>                      Pushing the arms away from body in a parallel fashion</p>	<p>A player cannot use the stick shaft between his hands to play an opponent, either when thrust against his opponent or striking him while running with his stick extended.</p>
	<p><b>DEEP POCKET</b>                      Pointing toward the illegal pocket</p>	<p>A player may not use a stick that doesn't conform to specifications. For example, it is a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1-minute non-releasable penalty if a stick has too deep a pocket or weaving not firmly attached.</li> <li>• 3-minute non-releasable penalty for any other reason and stick is removed for balance of game.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>ILLEGAL CROSSE</b>                      Pointing toward the illegal stick</p>	
	<p><b>ILLEGAL EQUIPMENT</b>                      Pointing toward the illegal equipment or where it would be on the player</p>	<p>A player may not use equipment that doesn't conform to specifications. For example: cutting palms out of gloves or altering protective equipment like shoulder and arm pads, non-regulation lacrosse helmets and mouth guards, Jewelry, unles: medical alert items taped.</p>



*Animated Signals*

## ARM SIGNALS

DIAGRAM	OFFICIAL'S MOTIONS	PERSONAL FOULS
	<p><b>SLASHING</b> Intersecting arms. One arm chopping the other, normally at face height</p>	A poke into the ribs, chest, neck or back. A vicious, uncontrolled swinging the stick, whether contact is made or not. The gloved hand on the stick may be legally checked.
	<p><b>TRIPPING</b> Swinging one arm at knee level</p>	A player may not trip an opponent with a positive action of his body or stick below their waist resulting in their being obstructed.
	<p><b>UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT</b> Arms extended from shoulder height</p>	<p><b>Non-releasable</b> - arguing with official, using threatening or obscene language or gestures, bating or taunting, or any other act officials deem unsportsmanlike.</p> <p><b>Releasable</b> - repeatedly committing same technical foul, not returning to field immediately, and a substitute deliberately not complying with rules for entering game.</p>
	<p><b>UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS</b> A salute motion</p>	Any excessively violent infraction of the rules governing holding or pushing. Includes checks delivered with a punching blow, against a player setting a pick or a stationary defender and checking an opponent who is in a vulnerable position.
	<p><b>FOULING OUT</b> No specific signal for foul Whistle with arm straight up or ejection motion often used</p>	A player, substitute, coach or other team personnel can be ejected from the game for serious infractions. See ejection foul page for further details. Ejection fouls are enforced with a three-minute non-releasable penalty.
	<p><b>EJECTION</b> Thumb Up, hand moves up over shoulder</p>	A player, substitute, coach or other team personnel can be ejected from the game for serious infractions. See ejection foul page for further details. Ejection fouls are enforced with a three-minute non-releasable penalty.



Animated Signals

## ARM SIGNALS

DIAGRAM	OFFICIAL'S MOTIONS	TECHNICAL FOULS
	<p><b>TECHNICAL FOULS</b>                      Technical fouls are fouls of a less serious nature and include all violations of the rules except those listed as personal or ejection fouls. Signal only if time being served. Arms placed in a "Tee" formation at chest level.</p>	<p>The penalty for a technical foul is either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30 second releasable penalty after flag-down, slow- whistle if fouled team had possession at the time</li> <li>• Possession awarded to fouled team after play-on ended if it wasn't in possession of the ball</li> <li>• If ball remains loose, fouled team awarded ball at spot of infraction</li> </ul>
	<p><b>CREASE VIOLATIONS</b>                      Sweeping motion of the arm towards the crease</p>	<p>Usually from stepping into the crease while on offense.</p>
	<p><b>HOLDING</b>                      Grasping a wrist with the opposite hand and using a vertical pumping motion</p>	<p>Numerous violations which include holding an opponent with a free hand and holding the body of an opponent with a stick.</p>
	<p><b>ILLEGAL OFFENSIVE SCREENING</b>                      One hand bent at elbow extending up and the other hand moving toward elbow</p>	<p>Teammate moving or stepping into opponent while trying to screen a player guarding a teammate.                      Often referred to as a "moving pick," no offensive player shall move into and make contact with a defensive player with the purpose of blocking a defensive player from the man he is playing.                      Called only when one offensive player checks a defensive player when the checker's team has possession.</p>
	<p><b>PUSHING</b>                      One hand against body and other hand makes a pushing motion away from body</p>	<p>A player shall not thrust or shove an opponent from the rear. Pushing is permitted from the front or side when an opponent has possession of the ball or is within 3 yards of a loose ball.</p>
	<p><b>ILLEGAL PROCEDURE</b>                      Forearms horizontal at chest level rotating around each other</p>	<p>Any number of actions on the part of players or substitutes of a technical nature that are not in conformity with the rules and regulations governing the play of the game shall be termed illegal procedure.</p>



*Animated Signals*

## ARM SIGNALS

DIAGRAM	OFFICIAL'S MOTIONS	TECHNICAL FOULS
	<b>CONDUCT FOUL</b> One arm held extended from body at shoulder height	Aggressively object by arguing or gesturing to a decision by an official.
	<b>INTERFERENCE</b> Hands crossed over the chest	Violations include impeding a player running through the attack area and contact not within 3 yards of a loose ball.  A player shall not interfere in any manner with the free movement of an opponent when his team has possession.
	<b>OFFSIDE</b> Both hands on hips	Too many players in either end of the field.
	<b>STALLING/DELAY OF GAME</b> Hands clasping forearms at stomach level	A stalling violation will be called if the ball leaves the goal area after the stall warning, unless it's from a shot deflected off the goal, goalie or a or a pass that is deflected by a defensive player.
	<b>WARDING OFF</b> Fist near chest while moving elbow up	A player in possession of the ball shall not use his free hand or arm or any other part of his body to hold, push or control the direction of the movement of the crosse or body of the player applying the check.
	<b>WITHHOLDING BALL FROM PLAY</b> Arms extended from body with one hand covering the other	Lying or sitting on a loose ball. Clamping a ball longer than necessary to pick it up.



## ARM SIGNALS

DIAGRAM	OFFICIAL'S MOTIONS	PROCEDURAL FOULS
	<p><b>GOAL SIGNAL</b> Turns toward center of field, arms raised and then lowered.</p>	<p>The goal line official calls all goals. The ball must pass completely through the plane of the back edge of the pipes. Hitting two or three pipes does NOT designate a goal.</p>
	<p><b>NO GOAL</b> Arms extended toward the ground and swung out-and-in so that they cross each other.</p>	<p>Goals that are scored illegally are quickly reversed by the official. Possession is awarded to the defending team.</p>
	<p><b>TIMEOUT</b> Turns towards the timer and crosses fully extended arms at the wrist above the head.</p>	<p>The official will alert the timekeeper when to stop the clock. In games that use running time, certain conditions like legal timeouts, injury timeouts and equipment checks will require the clock to be stopped.</p>
	<p><b>DIRECTION OF POSSESSION</b> Arm is raised horizontally at shoulder level and pointed towards the goal of the team awarded possession</p>	<p>The official will indicate the direction of play when either the ball goes out of bounds or there is a loose ball technical foul that results in a change of possession.</p>
	<p><b>OFFENSIVE STALLING WARNING</b> One hand vertically up and the other arm pointing towards goal</p>	<p>Attacking team is not making an effort to attack the goal and score.</p>
	<p><b>FAILURE TO ADVANCE</b> Hand over head, palm down, with a tapping motion</p>	<p>Failure to advance the ball over the midfield line in 20 seconds or to bring the ball into the goal area within 10 seconds after crossing the midfield line can result in a turnover.</p>
	<p><b>LOOSE BALL</b> Two hands pointing down at the ground</p>	<p>Indicates that the ball was loose when there was a technical foul.</p>
	<p><b>PLAY-ON</b> One hand extended above shoulder into the air</p>	<p>If a player commits a loose-ball or line violation foul, goalie interference or crease violation and the offended player may be disadvantaged by the immediate suspension of play, the official will delay the whistle and signal play-on.</p>



*Animated Signals*



# **GAME MANAGEMENT**

## GAME MANAGEMENT

“Game management” refers to the collection of techniques used to ensure that the game runs smoothly. Newer officials typically have to work hard just to correctly execute the “science” of lacrosse officiating: remembering all of the appropriate rules, judging the game correctly, and following the correct mechanics. Officials with a bit more experience can start to focus on the “art” of lacrosse officiating: keeping the game flowing, communicating appropriately, and preventing problems before they occur. This section is designed to help you learn some of the key aspects of game management.

### GAME MANAGEMENT 1: PRE-GAME

What you do in the twenty minutes before the game can have a tremendous impact on your game management. Showing up to the field with plenty of time to spare in a neat, clean uniform, carrying yourself professionally as you inspect the field, introduce yourself to the coaches, and conduct your coach’s certifications all create the feeling that you know what you’re doing. The coaches come to expect this routine, and if you deviate from it, they will start out questioning your abilities before you make a single call.

Ideally, you will get to the game early enough to check the field thoroughly. However, no matter how rushed you are, you must check the goals before the opening faceoff. It’s best to check them 20 minutes or so before the game so the home coach has time to fix them if necessary, then check them again right after the coin toss to make sure there are no balls left in the goal and no new holes. If you don’t check and there is a questionable goal and a hole in the net, one of the coaches is going to be furious.

It is also important to establish a rapport with the table personnel. Give them as much information and instruction as they can handle, because a smooth-operating table area goes a long way in game management. There are printed guidelines for timers and scorers available on the US Lacrosse web site which serve as a “cheat sheet” to help them stay on track; giving these to the table personnel often helps. In any case, make sure they know to call you over if they are unsure about anything.

Take some time to make sure the table is properly equipped with a working horn and a timing device. If there is a visible scoreboard, find out if the clock will be used and if it has an automatic horn for the end of the period. If not, be clear with the timer about the procedure for the end of the period.

The pre-game period is also a time for officials to communicate with each other. At higher levels, the pre-game may last an hour or more; at lower levels, it may consist of talking for a few minutes in the parking lot before taking the field. One of the first things to decide on a crew is where the crew members are going to officiate. Would the inexperienced official feel better working the far side of the field the entire game? How about in the closing minutes of a tight game? Do you want the experienced official on the bench side? The officials should also review mechanics, discuss any new rules interpretations, and determine if there are any special circumstances that they need to consider.



*Pre-Game  
Checklist*



*NCAA Timer  
Directions*



*NFHS Timer  
Directions*



*NCAA Scorer  
Directions*



*NFHS Scorer  
Directions*



*Coaches  
Certificatoin Cards*

## **GAME MANAGEMENT 2: FACEOFFS**

The faceoff is one of the keys to the game, most coaches tell their teams two of the keys to victory are winning faceoffs and ground balls. Given this, face offs are one of the most challenging parts of the game to officiate and many players use many things to give them an advantage. Our job is to insure that they are legal, according the rule book.

Some key points to focus one to help manage a proper and legal faceoff include:

- **In your pre-game, discuss if any of the officials have knowledge of the faceoff players. Is there any awareness of “Cheating” (i.e. using their hands, clamping, etc...)? If there are discuss how one of the wing officials can assist in the faceoff.**
- **If there is time take a few minutes to meet with the faceoff players from both teams to go over the expectations the crew has for the players and to answer any questions.**
- **At the initial faceoff of EVERY game, the faceoff official should review with the faceoff players the rules and mechanics of the faceoff (crosses perpendicular to the ground, no hands on the plastic, the neutral zone is clear, all body parts to the left of the head, the mechanics will be down, set, whistle etc...)**
- **Use PREVENTIVE officiating for the first few faceoffs, remind the players (or correct them) of incorrect faceoff positioning, BUT after a few warnings, you need to call an illegal procedure if they continue to violate the rules. Also, REMEMBER OFFICIALS DO NOT COACH PLAYERS, talk to them as a group, don't pick out one of the players.**
- **Remember on the face off (Youth and HS – NFHS) your cadence should be consistent. Down, slight pause to insure the players are in the correct faceoff position, then set and a quick whistle. Also, remember your arms should be at your side, your whistle in your mouth and verbal commands only, no pumping of the arm.**
- **Faceoff officials positioning is a personal decision, a recommendation is that on the first faceoff position yourself if the neutral zone, you can get a better view of their overall position. After that, randomly change from the neutral zone to straddling the midfield line. This will allow for different views.**
- **If you are conducting a faceoff with a player in the penalty area, remember to remind the table crew that the player CANNOT release until there is possession. It is a good idea to know how much time is remaining on the penalty so the officials are aware of the situation also.**

***REMEMBER, A KEY TO GOOD GAME MANAGEMENT IS A GOOD, LEGAL Faceoff!***

## **GAME MANAGEMENT 3: MECHANICS**

Employing proper mechanics is another important part of game management. The standard lacrosse mechanics are designed to put you in position to make the correct call. While there may be times when you deviate from these mechanics, it should only be done for a specific reason.

Coaches and players can tell when you're out of position to make a call even though most of them couldn't tell you where you were supposed to be. When an official calls—or doesn't call—a crease violation from 25 yards away, or he calls an end line out-of-bounds on a shot while standing on the goal-line extended instead of after chasing the play, the official erodes the confidence that the players have in that official's calls, and that impacts game management.

On the other hand, if the official is in the right position to make the call and sells the call, it's much harder for the coaches and players to debate it. For example, on a close call of a goal or a non-goal due to a crease violation, an inexperienced official might give a soft whistle, jog in from 25 yards away, and give a half-hearted goal signal, which just encourages the defensive team's coach to argue that it wasn't a goal. However, when the experienced official blasts the whistle, sprints in from 5 yards away and emphatically signals "no goal; crease violation" there isn't going to be much argument, even if the play was so close the call could have gone either way.

Similarly, contested end line calls should have an official there, on the end line, making the call. If you do make a long-distance call, run in several yards while blowing the whistle so that when you announce the call you are nearer the infraction. Always hold your direction-of-play signal for a beat or two: it takes that long for the table and the coaches to find you and see the direction you're pointing.

## **GAME MANAGEMENT 4: DEAD-BALL OFFICIATING**

One complaint of many coaches and players is that some officials interrupt the flow of the game. Sometimes, that's coach-speak for "We wish they'd never call any fouls and just let them play," but other times they have a legitimate complaint, because the officials are supposed to keep the game moving as much as possible.

The most glaring example of this occurs during dead-ball situations. Dead-ball situations are not a rest time for officials: the officials need to work hard to make sure that play gets restarted quickly and appropriately. However, we tend to focus our training on what to do during live-ball play, so when play stops many officials aren't sure what to do, thus slowing down the game. This is not the only problem, since the coaches and players can sense when the officials aren't sure what to do, and that undermines their confidence in the officials. This is especially true in three-person mechanics, where the delays can be longer if the officials aren't working hard during the dead-ball situations. Good officials know how to anticipate the restart requirements during a dead ball or time-out so delays are minimal.

When there is a loose-ball technical foul, the officials need to stop play, report the foul quickly, and restart play. When reporting the foul, only the barest details need be communicated (i.e., say and signal "Loose, push! Blue ball!"; not "White, number 39, loose ball push in the back, blue ball!") unless there is something specific that needs to be explained because the call is unusual (and even then, keep it short). This is not a time for counting players or connecting with your partners; because the foul occurred during a loose ball, the proper number of players should already be on the field and your partners should be focused on the play. If the ball needs to be moved outside the attack area, do so quickly; if not, you should blow the whistle as soon as the ball is in the crosse of a player from the correct team and there are no other players within 5 yards. In fact, good, well-coached teams will be eager to start play and will pick up the ball and be ready to go as soon as you make the call; if you aren't ready when they are, they'll be asking, "Whistle? Whistle?" At the same time, remember there are no "running re-starts" (i.e., while the player with the ball doesn't necessarily need to be stationary when the whistle blows, he cannot be allowed to gain an unfair advantage by getting a running start before the whistle). Also, if the player with the ball is fairly close to the correct re-start location, let him start. Constantly stopping the game to get the player to stand exactly where they should is irritating to both teams.

This brings up another point: if you call a loose-ball push on player B1, and B1 wants to argue with you about it, you could warn him, ask him to address his concerns to his coach, or give him a conduct foul. However, sometimes a more effective way to end the discussion is to just start play while he's trying to argue with you. By doing so, you accomplish two things: you keep the flow of the game moving, and you punish B1 for arguing (since he's out of the play while trying to argue with you, essentially forcing his team to play man-down for a short time) without interrupting the flow of the game!

When there's a whistle for a non-time-serving foul (e.g., a ward, an illegal offensive screen, a loose ball push followed by the fouling team gaining possession), the rules require the offending team to place the ball on the ground. If a team tries to gain an advantage by rolling or throwing the ball away, thus making it harder for the other team to get a quick restart, this is illegal procedure and should be penalized. Of course, you need to use your judgment, because if the ball rolls a few yards there's really no advantage gained, and if they roll it a little bit farther you can let it slide with a warning (to the player, and repeated to the coach). But if they throw the ball far enough away that it slows down the game, it deserves a 30-second penalty. In this case, you interrupt the flow of the game once in order to ensure the game keeps moving later.

## **GAME MANAGEMENT 4: DEAD-BALL OFFICIATING (CONT.)**

For any time-serving penalty, the officials need to communicate the penalty to each other quickly and then communicate in detail to the scorer's table. Take your time communicating with the table area; this is your time to shine. Make eye contact and make sure they know what is happening. You're an official until you blow the whistle; at that time, you become a salesman. While the trail reports the penalty to the table, the other official or officials should get the ball to the right spot on the field. As soon as the trail finishes reporting the penalty and is sure the bench understands the foul, he should click his timer, after which the teams have 20 seconds to substitute if they desire. As soon as they are done subbing and are in position—or when the timer goes off, assuming the teams have the right number of players on the field—the officials should signal each other and play should resume. The players should not have to wait for the officials in this situation unless the officials need to correct a problem.

This is not to say that the officials cannot huddle to get things right if there is a complex penalty situation (e.g., B1 slashes A1, flag down; A1 passes to A2 who shoots and scores, but A1 slashes B1. Was the slash live-ball or dead ball? Is possession awarded or is there a faceoff? What is the penalty situation?). In such a situation, it is more important to get things right than to keep the game moving. However, situations like these should not happen often, and if the officials must delay the game to huddle more than once or twice a game it can be a sign of poor officiating.

While one important aspect of dead-ball officiating is keeping the game moving, there are others. Often, when the officials stop play, they immediately look to each other to find out what the call is since they are concerned about getting the play restarted. However, if you turn to each other too quickly, you will eventually miss some residual action after the play such as a late hit or a slash after the whistle. These incidents have a huge impact on your game management, since often everyone sees them but you (and you often know that something happened but can't make the call because you didn't see it). Or, as often happens, you might see only the retaliation and not the act that precipitated it.

One key to dead-ball officiating is to make sure all residual activity from the play has stopped before you turn to take the call from your partner. Your partner should wait for you to make eye contact before starting to signal, so you shouldn't miss anything. Someone should always be watching the field and players at all times. A crew of officials can live with a missed offside call, but a missed late hit or off-ball high hit brings a game down quickly. Work just as hard at officiating in dead balls as in live balls. Watch the players cross during time-outs and the ends of periods from near the bench-side wing line before looking at your scorecard. Watch the teams cross again as they break from their huddles and go to their field positions.

Another key is that the trail official must focus on the shooter after the shot—and not the ball entering the goal—to make sure there are no late hits during the dead ball. If you miss these fouls, it leads to a high level of frustration among the coaches and players, which can lead to an out-of-control game.

## **GAME MANAGEMENT 5: COMMUNICATION**

### **General rules about communication**

Communication is a key and essential part of game management. By communicating with the coaches and players, you can often diffuse problem situations before the game gets out of control.

When you communicate, you need to be professional! Always refer to them as coach, do not use their first name, especially if you are friends off the field with them, you do not want to give any indication of a relationship as it could be detrimental to your managing the game.

A great time to establish a communication and rapport with the coach is during the pre-game certification. If do not know that coach, ask some basic questions, such how is the season going, do they have any rules questions, whatever you feel would be helpful in developing a basic relationship. If it is somebody new to coaching or new to lacrosse, you might communicate differently (i.e. you might ask periodically if they have any questions, there is nothing wrong with helping them along as long as you don't help or advise them on coaching).

### **If you establish a good rapport and relationship, a coach can become a great advocate for the officials.**

During the game, it is important to maintain your professional demeanor. For example, do NOT make any comments as to the play calling, the level of play or make any demeaning comments about their team or the other team. After a comment from a coach such as "that was a terrible call", don't come back and say "coach that was a terrible play you ran." If a coach says you made a terrible call, either ignore it, or tell the coach what you saw (if the situation and time permits).

If a coach continues to berate you, warn them to stop, but if you do, the next time you MUST, at the least conduct them. An example is, if you tell the coach you don't want to hear one more comment, if they do, you MUST, at a minimum conduct them.

Once the game starts, focus on what you need to communicate to manage the game and no more.

It is critical to avoid sarcasm; it is unprofessional and often misinterpreted by coaches. In fact, a large percentage of complaints about officials result from such misunderstandings.

This is not to say that you can't use humor. Humor is a great way to diffuse tense situations, although you need to be extremely careful. Try to observe the kind of humor used by experienced officials and learn from it, and remember don't be a comedian. A type of humor that seems to work best is self-deprecating humor (focused on yourself).

When you are faced with a verbal conflict, be sure to keep your voice level under control. If a coach screams at you and you scream back, you look bad, but if the coach is screaming and you're talking in a normal voice, the coach is the one that looks bad. Also, be aware of non-verbal communication: the way you say things and your body language while you're saying them often carry more weight than what you're saying.

Even though the rules don't require you to address questions from the coaches (except at the end of halftime under NCAA rules or during a coach's challenge under NFHS rules), don't make the mistake of refusing to talk with them at all. If a coach has a respectful question about why you called something, answering it can keep the lines of communication open, maintain the coach's level of respect for you, and prevent frustration. Also, if you've made a difficult call—whether because it involves a poorly-known or -understood rule or because the play was close—letting the coach know why you made the call can achieve the same thing. The coach may not seem particularly interested in your explanation, but that's often because they're embarrassed about not knowing the rule better.

In the same vein, we all make mistakes, no coach has ever coached the perfect game, and no official has ever reffed the perfect game. If you make an error and you realize it, and the coach questions you on the call - admit your mistake, apologize, and tell the coach "I blew it, I missed that, one, I am sorry...". Acknowledging a mistake often goes a long way with the coach.

The best way to get a coach to stop yelling at you is to restart the play quickly. Once live play is going, the coach is most likely focusing on the game, rather than you. For this reason, quick restarts are a key to successful game management.

Some people believe that on a controversial call it is better to leave the person who made the call on the far side of the field or even rotate him over to the far side. Actually, it is better to have him come over as soon as possible and "clear with air" with a quick explanation to the irate coach rather than to let the situation fester.

An often-overlooked means of communication is through body language. Coaches and players will zero in on an official who has the "deer in the headlights" look or who slouches when making calls as if unsure of himself. Conversely, they get irritated with the "gunslinger" who peers in to the play with arms wide and ready to sling flags. Stand, tall relaxed and have the attitude that you can handle whatever presents itself.

## **GAME MANAGEMENT 6: DEALING WITH CONDUCT ISSUES**

### **Coach and Player Conduct**

Even if you do everything right, there will always be games with poor conduct. Don't expect coaches and players to be rational or objective while they're involved in an emotional and physical game. There will often be times when they're certain you're wrong about a rule when you're right or when both coaches are sure you're favoring the other team. Furthermore, many coaches and players don't understand basic officiating principles such as mechanics and the principle of advantage/disadvantage. None of this, however, means you need to tolerate abusive behavior, either directed at you or among players, coaches, or spectators.

The first rule of dealing with coaches is that comments (e.g., "That's a slash!") can be ignored, while questions (e.g., "Why didn't you call a slash there?"; "Sir, could you please explain to me why we didn't get a free clear for that goalkeeper interference foul?") may or may not be responded to. Coaches are entitled to their opinions, and you can't expect them to coach without expressing their opinions. When they make comments about what they think should be called, it can generally be let go. If they politely ask questions and the game situation allows it, answer them whenever possible; this is an expected part of the official's job, and it also helps you to manage the game by building a relationship with the coach.

However, there are lines you can't allow to be crossed. These include:

- **Profanity directed toward you or another game participant.**
- **Any player or coach questioning your integrity as an official.**
- **Direct criticism of you as an official (e.g., while you might ignore "That's an awful call," you can't ignore "You're an awful official!").**
- **Threats of any kind (e.g., "I'm going to get you in the parking lot after the game!"; "If you call one more penalty against my team you'll never officiate a game at this school again!").**
- **Any comments of a prejudicial or racist nature.**
- **A coach who is out of control. Adults who have lost control of themselves cannot be expected to control the kids playing.**

In cases of poor conduct, officials generally follow an escalating progression, starting with a verbal warning, followed by a conduct foul when the offending team has possession, then by a time-serving conduct foul, then a 1- to 3-minute unsportsmanlike conduct, and finally by a flagrant misconduct expulsion foul. Depending on the severity of the foul and what preceded it, steps in this progression may be repeated or skipped.

The important thing to remember is that, at some level, lacrosse is supposed to be fun, and that allowing this sort of behavior to continue makes it difficult for anyone to have fun, and it can ultimately degrade the contest into an unsafe situation because it can lead to excessively violent play and fighting. Officials who pride themselves on being able to handle a great deal of abuse aren't doing anyone any favors, particularly the next set of officials, who face a coach or players who think they can get away with any level of abuse. If you see this kind of behavior in your games, put a stop to it immediately.

### **Spectator behavior**

Dealing with spectators is another issue. If spectators have general comments about your officiating, ignore them. However, if they begin to use abusive language toward you or the players, or if they make threats of any kind, inform the site manager of the problem and ask that the problem fans be removed. Of course, the "site manager" at an NCAA Division I game is going to be very different than the one at a high school Varsity game played at a school stadium or a high school club game played at a public park; the rule of thumb is that you tell the home coach about the problem and ask that he take care of it; in the club game, he may have to do it himself, while at higher levels he may pass the assignment on to an athletic director or to school security. But if the problem is bad enough for you to notice it while officiating, it may be that some corrective action should be taken. In any case, never elevate the position of fans complaining about your officiating by addressing them directly.

## **GAME MANAGEMENT 6: DEALING WITH CONDUCT ISSUES (CONT.)**

It is important to keep spectators away from the field. Do not allow play to continue if there are fans within 6 yards of the sideline or on either end line. If necessary, be generous in your interpretation of “6 yards.” It’s a liability issue for you if someone who is too close to the field gets hurt, but it is also harder for the fans to abuse the players the farther away they are.

Under unusual circumstances, you may ask that the site manager eject certain fans (or even all of them). In most areas, it is rarely necessary to eject fans, but the need does arise. For example, suppose you have a high-school rivalry game with two physical teams, and a group of fans from one school is sitting at midfield and continually peppering the players from the other school with offensive remarks. If you try to ignore it, the physicality of the game may escalate as the fans get under the players’ skin. Instead, first have the site manager try to politely ask them to stop. If they continue to abuse the players, ask the site manager to remove the offending fans, and do not resume play until he or she complies.

### **Warning signs**

While there are times that a game will deteriorate so rapidly that you don’t have time to act, in many cases there are warning signs that alert you of the need to take corrective action. Spotting these signs comes with experience, but a few examples follow:

- **A sure danger sign is when players and coaches become more concerned with hitting than with trying to play good lacrosse. When hard body checks are drawing louder cheers than goals, when players knock down opponents and stand over them in a show of dominance rather than chasing after the loose ball they just created, these are signs that the game is taking a turn for the worse and that you need to take corrective action.**
- **In a two-person game, you’ve noticed A1 and B1 each take a couple hard shots at each other during the game, and A1 lays a big hit on B1, resulting in a turnover. B1 seems to take exception to the hit as the ball is being cleared by Team A. You’re the new trail, so in principle you’re supposed to follow the ball down the field, but you notice B1 lingering near A1. Even though you’re supposed to be watching the ball, everything in this situation screams out that you should watch and listen to A1 and B1 instead. You may hear B1 threaten A1 or see B1 commit a cheap shot; if you do, penalize it heavily, since B1 is counting on you being focused on the ball to take an opportunity to take an action that could result in a fight. He is probably also hoping that A1 will retaliate and that A1 will get caught. By focusing on these two players for a few extra moments, you are able to penalize the guilty party, remove A1’s incentive to take matters into his own hands, and discourage further away-from-the-ball antics because you’ve sent the message that you’re watching.**
- **Team A’s star midfielder A1 scores a goal and is drilled by B1 well after the goal. The trail official penalizes B1 for a dead-ball illegal body check. However, A1 is injured on the play and is carted off the field. Immediately after B1’s penalty expires and B1 re-enters the field, A2 subs onto the field carrying a crosse with a wooden shaft and chases after B1. Now, officially, there is nothing illegal about a wooden shaft, but the fact that you haven’t seen a wooden shaft all day—and then suddenly one of them is chasing after the player who injured the other team’s star player—is a pretty good indication that Team A may be seeking revenge and that the situation bears watching. There are various ways to proceed here; for example, one might be to talk to the Team A head coach and tell him what you saw. Explain that it is legal to use a wood shaft, but that you’re watching to make sure it doesn’t end up being used as a weapon, and you’d prefer it if you didn’t have to expel anyone today.**

When you see warning signs such as these, you need to take action, and game management shifts to game control.

## **GAME MANAGEMENT 6: DEALING WITH CONDUCT ISSUES (CONT.)**

### **Game control**

When you sense that the game is starting to deteriorate—or when it suddenly gets out of hand with no warning—it is time to clamp down on the game and make sure you limit the number of opportunities for problems.

Here are some techniques you can use to control the game when necessary:

- **You and your partners can set the threshold for calling fouls much lower. This will result in more whistles, more flags, and more players serving penalties but in fewer opportunities for actions that escalate into a fight.**
- **You can change the pace of the game, taking more time during dead balls to explain penalties and settling down the players before resuming play. Be generous in your interpretation of 5 yards on restarts, and make players stand completely motionless on the restart. This gives the players time to decompress. (This technique is especially effective in a running-time game.) Sometimes the faster, hotter, and more contentious the game the slower, cooler, and more soothing the officials have to act.**
- **If the benches are getting out of control, gather all of the coaches together and explain to them about the importance of honoring the game and setting a sportsmanlike example.**
- **If the situation warrants, explain that it's possible to play the rest of the game with a full penalty area, to expel players, or to suspend the game if the behavior doesn't improve. Explain that you're disappointed with their behavior and you're sure that they want to improve it so the rest of the game can be played. Tell them that your job is to keep the game safe, fair, and fun—in that order—and that you can take all of the fun out of the game if that's what it takes to keep the game safe.**

The key idea is that when the game is out of control, you have to use your whistle and flag to maintain order. That doesn't mean that you ignore the other aspects of game management, but if you need to flag or expel a few coaches or players to get your point across, do it.

### **Game termination**

When officiating youth games, the US Lacrosse Sportsmanship Card procedures should be used to deal with unacceptable behavior from players, coaches, and fans; the rules used for youth games have explicit procedures for game termination. The youth rules supplement to the NFHS rules support the philosophy that—since the primary responsibility of the officials is to protect the safety of the players and the culture of the game—then officials may terminate the game if the situation warrants it. Situations that might result in game termination include:

- **Threats made toward the officials**
- **A brawl or multiple fights before or during the game.**
- **Continued “dirty play” from one or both teams.**
- **Inappropriate fan behavior that is not corrected.**
- **Continued abusive language, taunting, baiting, or inflammatory comments from players, coaches, spectators, or fans.**

Although in extreme situations it might be reasonable to terminate the game immediately, in most cases you will call the head coaches together and explain to them that under the objectionable circumstances, you have no obligation to allow the game to continue. The “carding” of the coach (or coaches) indicates that the game is being continued under the Sportsmanship Card and the threat of game termination. Then, if necessary, follow through with the Sportsmanship Card provisions for terminating the game. Be sure to record the game situation (score, possession, penalties, time left and quarter) in case the game is to be resumed at a later date, call your assignor as soon as possible to explain the situation, and send the assignor a written report of the incident within 24 hours. Your partner should do the same.

## GAME MANAGEMENT 7: TYPES OF GAMES

There are certain types of games that require special attention. These include:

**The rout.** A game where one team is winning by a large margin, you face the serious risk that the losing team will start taking cheap shots out of frustration. You need to be extremely vigilant despite the fact that the game has probably already been decided. The bright side is that routs are easier to manage than close games because it is extremely unlikely that any call you make will have an impact on the outcome of the game. If there's any kind of scuffle, even a minor one, send both players involved to the penalty area for one to three minutes (non-releasable, since they'll be starting their penalties at the same time); this will create more space on the field and make it less likely that you will have problems. If you explain to the leading coach that you're trying to keep things settled down and to protect his or her players by getting some players off the field, he'll understand.

One consideration when sending two players off for a minor scuffle or altercation: under NFHS rules, a second non-releasable unsportsmanlike conduct foul results in an expulsion (and, in most states, a suspension for a subsequent game or games). Thus, it often makes more sense to send the players off for unnecessary roughness instead; the penalty is the same (since they're getting sent off at the same time, the penalties will be non-releasable) and you avoid having to expel any players. Of course, if the players' actions warrant, give the unsportsmanlike conduct penalty, but this option gives you a lesser foul when it's appropriate.

The most important thing to remember in a rout is that you can't become sloppy just because the result of the game has essentially been decided. Do whatever it takes to keep your head in the game, because ignoring game management in a rout can put you in the middle of the brawl if the frustration level of the losing team is allowed to grow unchecked.

In a rout in a lower-level game, you might inquire discreetly to the coach getting beaten if he wants to keep the full time on the clock or shorten the periods, or have the clock operator be judicious in allowing the clock to run a few seconds after the whistle blows. Again, these tips work best in youth games and almost never should be broached at a college game. In the latter, let the coaches initiate that conversation with you.

**The elimination game.** In playoff games, teams tend to be more evenly matched, and the importance of the game tends to make players play more in control since no one wants to be the one who took a dumb foul in a close game and cost his or her team the chance to win. Still, emotions run high in these games, and you must carefully monitor the situation, especially when the game is not close.

Tournament games are similar, except that there are often many games played in one day, which leads to physical, mental, and emotional fatigue in the players, coaches, fans, and even spectators. In particular, tired players are more likely to play sloppy lacrosse and to play defense with their sticks instead of their feet and heads, leading to more fouls.

Always protect the team "going through to the next round," as a losing team might want to incite a scuffle to prevent a winning opposing player from participating in the next tournament contest. Is the winning-team player actually actively involved in an incident, or was he merely raising his arm to protect himself?

Also, you should always be aware of the weather conditions, but this is especially true for tournaments held in hot, humid conditions. The NFHS Rules and US Lacrosse Youth Rules specifically allow for the officials to call extra time-outs to help players deal with the heat, and this is never more important than when the teams play multiple games in these conditions.

**The rivalry game.** Rivalry games come in a variety of styles. They can be games between schools that:

- **Have a traditional rivalry in all sports.**
- **Have a rivalry in lacrosse only.**
- **Have a history of bad blood arising from on- or off-field incidents.**
- **Just don't like each other.**

## **GAME MANAGEMENT 7: TYPES OF GAMES (CONT.)**

There is some debate about how the assignor should handle rivalry games. One school of thought is that the officials should be told of the rivalry so they are ready to take control of the game from the start. The other view is that you're better off not telling the officials since doing so creates preconceptions that might influence how they call the game. There is no clear "correct approach."

If you are assigned to a rivalry game, you need to make a decision about whether to say anything to the coaches before the game. Some officials will warn the coaches that the game will be called tightly from the start, while others simply speak with the coaches as if it were any other game. Again, there is no "correct approach," but warning the coaches before the game may create the impression that you have pre-judged the teams, so be careful. You need to officiate the game that presents itself.

One significant difference in a rivalry game is that there may be an emotional crowd, which can, in turn, amplify the emotions of the players. As an official, you don't want to pay too much attention to the spectators, but be aware of how the players are reacting to them. With an emotional game, you tend to see more aggressive players and more obvious fouls.

In a rivalry game, you'll probably start out calling things a little more tightly than you would for two teams that rarely play each other because you know there is a significant risk of cheap shots escalating. That doesn't mean you have to call every foul, just that you send a message that it's not going to be a free-for-all where no fouls are called at all. When players believe that the officials are not going to penalize fouls, they will often decide to take matters into their own hands, and this is especially true in a rivalry game. If the teams get the message and behave themselves, you can ease off a bit as the game goes on.

***The inexperienced team.*** In youth lacrosse, or at higher levels of play where most of the players are playing lacrosse for the first time, you may be faced with one or two teams with little idea what they are doing. Perhaps the coaches don't know the game either. When this happens, you shouldn't worry too much about being accused of coaching; instead, do what it takes to help the teams get through the game. You may take extra time to correct faceoff positioning or to explain to people that you actually did see the loose-ball push and had a play-on for it but since the fouled team gained possession, there was no need to stop play.

In a game like this, the players are likely to commit fouls due to lack of control and ignorance rather than intent and testosterone, so when you flag someone try to make sure that he understands what he did wrong and that it's all part of learning the game. If you see something that hints at a team-wide misconception (e.g., the players continually go into the opponent's crease), politely explain the rule to the coach so he can relay it to the players; this reduces everyone's frustration level.

If only one team is inexperienced, you may find that the game is also a rout. In that case, the usual warnings about routs apply. Be especially alert to an athletic but unskilled new team getting embarrassed and trying to take out their frustrations physically.

## **GAME MANAGEMENT 8: THE PRINCIPLE OF ADVANTAGE/DISADVANTAGE**

You should not automatically penalize everything you see that is technically, according to the rules, a foul. Doing so makes for a tedious game and will earn the ire of the coaches, players, and fans. The difficult part is determining which fouls to call and which to ignore. The guiding principle for these situations is called “The Principle of Advantage/Disadvantage.” The basic idea is that you should call:

- **Fouls that present a safety issue (which includes most personal fouls).**
- **Fouls that you must call to maintain proper behavior (conduct fouls and unsportsmanlike conduct fouls).**
- **Fouls that are obvious to everyone (e.g., line violations, such as crease violations and offside).**
- **Technical fouls that disadvantage the fouled team or create an unfair advantage for the fouling team.**

The last item is the most difficult to explain, and is most easily seen by example.

Suppose player A1 is running down the field clearing the ball and B1 pushes him from behind, making him stumble briefly. If A1 doesn't fall or lose possession of the ball, there's probably no need to call a foul. However, if B1 commits exactly the same push in a different situation, a flag for the push may be appropriate. For example, the push might cause A1 to:

- **Go out of bounds.**
- **Go offside.**
- **Step into the crease.**
- **Move past the goal, making him miss a scoring opportunity.**
- **Lose possession.**

In each of these cases, A1 has been disadvantaged by the foul and so the flag must be thrown.

So, whenever judging technical fouls, try to determine whether an advantage has been gained before calling the foul. This is not easy, and may take you a few years to get comfortable with these kinds of decisions; talking to experienced officials about why they did or didn't call a foul can help you learn this important principle.

## GAME MANAGEMENT 9: THE PLAY-ON

Proper use of the play-on technique is important for proper game control. Many newer officials have a hard time remembering when to use the play-on, and so some of the nuances of its use for game control are lost on them. It is important to understand the reason the play-on exists in order to apply it in a way that helps your game management.

The play-on was devised primarily for the area between the defensive restraining line and the midfield line.

It is here where fewer players will generally be involved in the play. This can occur before possession is declared on the faceoff as well as an errant pass coming out of the attack goal area.

The main idea behind the play-on is that it allows play to continue so that a team that is on the receiving end of a loose-ball technical foul can continue play without being disadvantaged. It has the added feature of improving the flow of the game by reducing the number of whistles.

For example, suppose B1 pushes A1 from behind during a loose ball, and then A1 immediately scoops up the ball and has a clear path to the goal. Blowing the whistle for the loose-ball push actually disadvantages Team A; if you stopped play, you'd just be awarding them possession, which they already have, and that clear path to the goal is not going to be there when the play restarts. Furthermore, even if there hadn't been a clear path to the goal, allowing play to continue means there's one fewer whistle blown and the game keeps moving. This is what the play-on was designed for.

Although calling a play-on around the crease area is following protocol, this would not be wise since other fouls can occur. If a defensive player commits a personal foul, the defensive team will be playing with a man down. If an offensive player commits a personal foul, then this will lead to a simultaneous situation with the defensive team being awarded the ball. This would now be a big disadvantage to the offensive team (who had been fouled originally). Whenever there is a situation such as this, immediately blow the whistle, indicate the loose ball foul, and restart the game 20 yards laterally.

For example: In a loose-ball scrum with 8 players, B1 pushes A1 from behind. If you allow play to continue and A1 scoops the ball, he's likely to get the ball checked right out of his stick or be fouled again, so in this case it makes sense to kill the play fairly quickly. Here, you do not disadvantage Team A with a quick whistle.

How long you wait before blowing the whistle on a play-on is a key aspect of game management. Some guidelines:

- **The lower the level of play, the shorter the play-on should be. A newer official on a youth game might want to not use them at all. At lower levels of play, players are much more likely to get hurt during loose-ball scrums, so it makes sense to end those plays as quickly as possible. In fact, during loose-ball scrums at low levels—and often in higher-level games where play is starting to get out of control—you should be looking for any technical foul you could possibly call to get the ball off the ground. While people may accuse you of making a “picky” call, letting the loose-ball scrum continue too long can be hazardous.**
- **If the ball pops out of the scrimmage area and it seems likely that a player from the fouled team will be able to track down the ball and scoop it uncontested, you can allow the play-on to continue for quite a bit longer. However, if the player seems to be trying to delay scooping the ball to take time off the clock, blow the whistle and award possession.**
- **A North-South play-on is better than an East-West play-on, and a play-on in the attack half of the field is better than a play-on in the defensive half of the field.**
  - o What would a fouled team rather have: a nice clean restart with all players five yards away or uninterrupted possession of the ball at that moment?
  - o What advantage have you given a player who scoops up a loose ball during a play-on right on the sideline surrounded by three defensemen? You must decide.
  - o If you can answer those two questions, then you understand the concept of the play-on.

## **GAME MANAGEMENT 10: MISTAKES BY OFFICIALS**

All officials will occasionally blow a call, with, of course, the better officials making fewer mistakes. This can be because of a rule misunderstanding or misapplication, because the official was out of position to make the correct call, or because the official just didn't see what actually happened. Whatever the reason, how you handle making a mistake can have a huge impact on your management of the game.

The best way for the crew to handle a mistake is to huddle and correct the mistake before it has an impact on the game. Often, one official will realize that a call is incorrect but won't want to "show up" a fellow official and will keep his or her mouth shut, but most coaches and players will have much more respect for the crew if they meet and get the call right. In other situations, where you blow a call and realize it (or you call a play that was close enough that you realize you may or may not have gotten the call right), honesty is often the best policy. If the coach is mad because he says you blew the call, and you say, "You're right coach, I'm sorry, it won't happen again," it's very difficult for them to keep up a tirade. Just don't put yourself in a position where you need to do this too often!

It's also important to know what to say to the coach by your side when the far-side official makes a marginal call. Never "throw your partner under the bus." Practice responses such as:

- **"Coach, he was right there."**
- **"Coach, it's hard to tell from 50 yards away where we are."**
- **"He had a good angle there, Coach; he must have seen something we didn't."**

If your partner makes a call that the coach doesn't understand and you don't know what the call was either, tell the coach you'll check with your partner and ask what about the call when there's a break in the action, then remember to follow up with your partner and the coach.

If a mistake is made – don't make it worse with quick restarts and confusion. Communication to crew/players/table and coaches is critical.

If needed give teams the chance to get the right players on the field or in position. Examples might be:

- **Pointing in wrong direction**
- **Inadvertent whistle/flag**
- **Overruled call**

Tips to prevent mistakes

- **Know the rules**
- **Do not "fish in someone else's pond" unless you are 110% sure**
- **If you keep seeing you partners mistakes – Who is watching your area?**
- **Never pass on a Personal Foul**
- **Did you partner not see a call a call or did he "pass" on it? If he passed what is the reason?**



# **APPENDICES**

## **APPENDIX I: AVAILABLE TRAINING TOOLS**

### **US Lacrosse Men's Officials Educational Content**

[www.uslacrosse.org/menofficialsresources](http://www.uslacrosse.org/menofficialsresources)

#### **Training Materials**

- Officials Training Manual
- 3rd Team on Field DVD
- Rules Interpretation Video
- 'You Make the Call' video clips
- Online Testing Administration and Tracking

#### **Evaluation Forms**

- Junior Officials
- Level 1 Officials
- Level 2 Officials
- Level 3 Officials

#### **Officials Resources**

- NCAA Directions for **Timer** | **Scorer**
- NFHS Directions for **Timer** | **Scorer**
- **Field Diagram (Blank)**
- **Field Diagram (Dimensions)**
- **Game Bag Tips**
- **Scorecard**
- **Coaches Certification Card**
- **Animated Officials Signals**
- **Junior Officials Supplement (PDF)**
- **Uniform Checklist**
- **Pregame Card**
- **Fouls Decision Tree**



*Men's Officials  
Resources*



*ArbiterSports US Lacrosse  
Officials Central Hub*

## **APPENDIX II: HOW OFFICIALS HONOR THE GAME**

By getting coaches, parents, and administrators on the same page about Honoring the Game before the season starts, we hope to reduce the number of negative incidents that occur at youth games. However, even with the right training and expectations in place, negative incidents still happen. This is when it is particularly important for game officials to have a plan. Here are a few tips to get you started —please refer to the “Post Game” section for more information.

The PCA recommends that officials always introduce themselves to the coaches before the start of the game. Officials at youth games can remind coaches that they expect them to take responsibility for the conduct of their fans, and if there is trouble during the game with the fans, the officials will come to the coaches to ask for their help in taking care of this problem. Officials and coaches should view themselves as working together to create and maintain a positive environment for the players.

Unfortunately, on some occasions officials have to deal with abusive behavior from coaches. In these cases, where coaches are no longer Honoring the Game, officials bear the ultimate responsibility to ensure players are taking part in a safe and positive environment. Although it is neither fun nor easy, officials need to address abusive coaches in a calm and respectful manner to remind them that their conduct is inappropriate. If the situation persists, coaches should be warned that the game is in danger of being terminated.

By spreading the Honor-the-Game message to all involved in lacrosse, we hope to improve the game environment for officials, hence addressing the constant lack of officials. Officials should view themselves as an important adult group working to support a culture that Honors the Game, and they should feel joined in this effort by coaches, parents, and administrators. Positive Coaching Alliance and US Lacrosse are here to help you.

US Lacrosse asks you to consider your role in Honoring the Game, showing respect for all the people working together to make lacrosse the great game that it is. Take this simple test—and be sure you can check off every one before you head out to officiate:

- I understand and will reinforce that the safety of the participants in the game is more important than the final score.
- I understand that lacrosse officials do not make the rules, they only apply them.
- I understand that children learn from adults, and my behavior reflects what I want children to learn.
- I value the contribution of coaches in developing players’ talents, even though I may not always agree with their strategies.
- I understand that I must consider the level of play when officiating and respond accordingly.
- I understand that the biggest reason for players (and officials!) quitting the game is verbal abuse.
- I understand that players, coaches and officials are learning the game, and mistakes will be made in the learning process.
- I understand that officials are responsible for ensuring that the game is played in a safe and fair manner for all participants.

Thank you for your help in the efforts to make lacrosse a positive experience for everyone!

## **APPENDIX III: US LACROSSE CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **The Code of Conduct**

Players, coaches, officials, parents, spectators and fans are to conduct themselves in a manner that “Honors the Game” and demonstrates respect to other players, coaches, officials, parents, spectators, and fans. In becoming a member of the lacrosse community an individual assumes certain obligations and responsibilities to the game of lacrosse and its participants. The essential elements in this “Code of Conduct” are honesty and integrity. Those who conduct themselves in a manner that reflects these elements will bring credit to the sport of lacrosse, themselves, their team and their organization. It is only through such conduct that our sport can continue to earn and maintain a positive image and make its full contribution to amateur sports in the United States and around the world. US Lacrosse supports the following behaviors for those participating or involved in any way with US Lacrosse in general. The following essential elements of the “Code of Conduct” must be adhered to:

- **Sportsmanship and teaching the concepts of fair play are essential to the game and must be taught at all levels and developed both at home and on the field during practices and games.**
- **The value of good sportsmanship, the concepts of fair play, and the skills of the game should always be placed above winning.**
- **The safety and welfare of the players are of primary importance.**
- **Coaches must always be aware of the tremendous influence they have on their players. They are to strive to be positive role models in dealing with young people, as well as adults.**
- **Coaches should always demonstrate positive behaviors and reinforcement toward players, parents, officials and spectators alike. Players should be specifically encouraged and positively reinforced by coaches to demonstrate respect for teammates, opponents, officials, and spectators.**
- **Players should always demonstrate positive behaviors and respect toward teammates, opponents, coaches, officials, parents, spectators, and fans alike.**
- **Coaches, players, parents, spectators, and fans are expected to demonstrate the utmost respect for officials and reinforce that respect in his or her players. Coaches are also expected to educate their players as to the important role of the lacrosse official and to reinforce the ideal of respect for the official by his or her players.**
- **Grievances or misunderstandings between coaches, officials or any other parties involved with the sport should be communicated through the proper channels and procedures, never on or about the field of play in view of spectators or participants.**
- **Officials are professionals and are therefore expected to conduct themselves as such and in a manner that demonstrates total impartiality, courtesy and fairness to all parties.**
- **Spectators involved with the game must never permit anyone to openly or maliciously criticize, badger, harass, or threaten an official, coach, player or opponent.**
- **Coaches must be able to demonstrate a solid knowledge of the rules of lacrosse, and should adhere to the rules in both the letter and the spirit of the game. Coaches should encourage and help to educate the players and spectators surrounding his or her program to develop a basic knowledge of the rules. Attempts to manipulate rules in an effort to take unfair advantage of an opponent, or to teach deliberate unsportsmanlike conduct, is considered unacceptable conduct.**
- **Eligibility requirements, at all levels of the game, must be followed. Rules and requirements such as age, previous level of participation, team transfers, etc, have been established to encourage and maximize participation, fair play and to promote safety.**

## **APPENDIX IV: US LACROSSE BENEFITS FOR OFFICIALS**

US Lacrosse provides a large number of benefits to its member officials, including:

- **Men's game Lacrosse Referee Development (LAREDO) on-field officials development programs.**
- **Liability insurance.**
- **Discounts on lacrosse officials uniform starter packages.**
- **Game fee insurance (for when you are hurt while officiating and miss officiating scheduled games; contact Bollinger insurance for full details).**
- **Secondary medical insurance.**
- **A free copy of the NFHS or NCAA rule book each year.**
- **Online rules testing.**
- **A subscription to *Lacrosse Magazine*.**
- **Discounts through the US Lacrosse store.**
- **Free admission to the US Lacrosse Museum in Baltimore.**
- **Access to US Lacrosse training and materials, which is continually being improved and expanded.**
- **Access to the US Lacrosse Convention, held in January of each year, which provides a full program of officiating clinics.**
- **The men's game email newsletter (for collegiate officials).**
- **The men's game Resources Page, which houses a number of useful documents for men's officials.**
- **Membership in local US Lacrosse chapter.**
- **Annual men's game awards.**
- **Customer service support.**
- **Nationwide support for the development of the sport of lacrosse.**

In order to continue to receive your benefits, you must keep US Lacrosse updated with your current email and home addresses. If you have a change to report, or if you think you are not receiving the correct correspondence from US Lacrosse, contact [membership@uslacrosse.org](mailto:membership@uslacrosse.org).

You can join US Lacrosse online by going to [uslacrosse.org](http://uslacrosse.org)



*US Lacrosse  
Membership Info*







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