



2011 » PARTICIPATION SURVEY



US Lacrosse National Headquarters
113 West University Parkway • Baltimore, MD 21210
Ph: 410.235.6882 • Fax: 410.366.6735
www.uslacrosse.org

Raise Your GAME™

ABOUT THIS SURVEY

The US Lacrosse Participation Survey is produced annually to monitor participation at different levels of the sport across the country. This survey counts only participation on organized teams and does not include leisure time play of lacrosse.

The primary source of data for this report is provided by the 64 US Lacrosse regional chapters. Each chapter reports participation at the youth, high school and post-collegiate levels. Significant data is also obtained from US Lacrosse membership records, the National Collegiate Athletic Association, the National Federation of State High School Associations and www.laxpower.com.

ABOUT US LACROSSE



US Lacrosse was founded on January 1, 1998, as the national governing body of men's and women's lacrosse. US Lacrosse is the result of a three-year strategic initiative to unify all national lacrosse associations in an effort to maximize human and financial resources, and maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of lacrosse promotion and development.

US Lacrosse provides a leadership role in virtually every aspect of the game throughout the United States, and offers a number of programs and information services to its national membership and more than one million lacrosse enthusiasts.

The US Lacrosse national headquarters is located in Baltimore and features a three-story administrative center, as well as the sport's national archives, the Lacrosse Museum and National Hall of Fame. US Lacrosse currently employs a staff of 60 at its national office and benefits from regular volunteer and intern assistance. Additionally, US Lacrosse has a network of 64 regional chapters throughout the country that help develop and promote the game at the grassroots level.

US Lacrosse, a 501 (c)(3) organization, relies on the growing membership support of more than 400,000 lacrosse players, coaches, officials and enthusiasts for a large portion of its operational funding. Additional funding programs include annual giving, planned giving, foundation and corporate giving, capital drives, grants, advertising and special events.

MISSION: Through responsive and effective leadership, US Lacrosse strives to provide programs and services to inspire participation while protecting the integrity of the sport.

VISION: We envision a future which offers people everywhere the opportunity to discover, learn, participate in, enjoy and ultimately embrace the shared passion of the lacrosse experience.

LACROSSE TODAY

For more than a decade, lacrosse has been one of the fastest-growing team sports in the country, and that trend continued last year. In 2011, more than 680,000 players participated in lacrosse on organized teams, an increase of more than 60,000 players from the year before. In terms of total number of players, it was the largest one-year increase in participation since US Lacrosse began tracking national data in 2001.

More than half of the total players compete at the youth level (age 15 and below), but every segment of the game is showing continued growth patterns.

At the youth level, the US Lacrosse survey reveals more than 360,000 players on organized teams in 2011, an increase of 11.3 percent over the previous year. The number of high school players topped 275,000 in 2011, an increase of 7.8 percent. The number of collegiate players (varsity and club) grew 4.6 percent to more than 33,000. Major League Lacrosse, one of two professional lacrosse leagues, has added expansion franchises in Charlotte, N.C., and Columbus, Ohio for the 2012 season and thousands of players continue to participate on the field at the post-collegiate level.



US Lacrosse reports that more than 680,000 people played on organized teams in 2011.

Beyond the sheer participation numbers, lacrosse continues to grow in terms of exposure. Led by the ESPN family of networks, nearly 100 collegiate and professional lacrosse games will be broadcast nationally this year, with scores more streamed on the web. CBS Sports Network and NBC Sports will also air games in 2012. The sport is also highlighted through print and Internet vehicles, led by *Lacrosse Magazine*, which is read each month by the more than 400,000 members of US Lacrosse.

Total Number of Lacrosse Players

Year	Players	% 1-yr Growth	Year	Players	% 1-yr Growth
2001	253,931	—	2009	568,021	8.4
2002	288,104	13.5	2010	624,593	10.0
2003	301,560	4.7	2011	684,730	9.6
2004	351,852	16.7			
2005	381,568	8.4			
2006	426,022	11.7			
2007	480,627	12.8			
2008	524,230	9.1			

LACROSSE PARTICIPATION IN 2011

Level	Male Players	Female Players	Total Players	% 1-Yr Growth
Youth	230,356	130,919	361,275	11.3
High School	162,416	112,865	275,281	8.0
College	20,397	13,532	33,929	4.6
Professional	180	0	180	0.0
Post-Collegiate	10,820	3,245	14,065	17.3
Total	424,169	260,561	684,730	9.6

Youth

Youth lacrosse participation (15 and under) rose to more than 360,000 players in 2011 and remains the age level with the highest participation rates in the sport. Roughly 64 percent of youth players are boys, but both boys' and girls' youth lacrosse are growing at similar rates. The number of boys playing lacrosse has risen 65.5 percent since 2006 and the number of girls playing lacrosse has risen 60.0 percent in that time frame.

The geographic expansion of the sport is evident. In 2001, the first year of the US Lacrosse Participation Survey, there were just five chapters that reported more than 5,000 youth players in their chapter area. In 2011, that number has grown to 19 and includes chapters from California, Colorado, Georgia, Minnesota, and Texas.

While lacrosse is expanding across new areas, it has also exploded in areas where the sport has been played for decades. The Connecticut and Philadelphia chapters each reported approximately 20,000 youth players in their areas in 2011. Just a decade ago, there were roughly 4,000 youth players in Connecticut and less than 2,000 in the Philadelphia area.



More than half of all lacrosse players are age 15 or younger.

US Lacrosse Annual Participation Survey

Year	Youth Boys	Youth Girls	Total Youth Players
2006	139,188	81,609	220,797
2007	155,866	85,715	241,581
2008	168,768	96,446	265,214
2009	182,249	115,022	297,271
2010	201,727	122,946	324,673
2011	230,356	130,919	361,275

High School

The 2011 National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) annual participation report listed girls' lacrosse as having the 10th most number of participants of all high school sports. It's the first time that lacrosse has reached into the top 10 of any category in terms of participation since the NFHS began tracking data in 1971.

Over the last five years, lacrosse is fastest growing team sport among NFHS member schools. The number of schools sponsoring boys' lacrosse has increased 57.1 percent, considerably ahead of the second-fastest growing sport of bowling (25.6 percent). On the girls side, the number of schools has increased 48.2 percent with bowling again coming in second (30.2).

As of 2012, the governing bodies for high school sports in 22 states have either formally sanctioned or recognized lacrosse. That number continues to grow with California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and South Carolina among the states added to that list since 2000.



Since 2006, more than 1,400 new high school lacrosse teams have been added.

Lacrosse also continues to grow dramatically at schools and states not under the NFHS umbrella for lacrosse. US Lacrosse chapters throughout the country help put on state championship events, and thousands of players continue to play for club teams that are affiliated with high schools either formally or informally.

NFHS Growth Rates (2006 to 2011) • Number of Schools Sponsoring the Sport

Boys' Sports	2006	2011	Growth Rate	Girls' Sports	2006	2011	Growth Rate
Lacrosse	1,395	2,192	57.1%	Lacrosse	1,349	1,999	48.2%
Bowling	1,954	2,454	25.6%	Bowling	1,871	2,436	30.2%
Volleyball	1,726	2,078	20.4%	Ice Hockey	445	578	29.9%
Water Polo	658	768	16.7%	Indoor Track	2,308	2,598	12.6%
Swimming	6,224	6,899	10.9%	Water Polo	678	762	12.4%

US Lacrosse Annual Participation Survey (Varsity, JV, Freshmen and Club Players)

Year	HS Boys	HS Girls	Total HS Players
2006	96,777	65,244	162,021
2007	112,496	74,550	187,046
2008	131,092	87,731	218,823
2009	136,710	90,914	227,624
2010	149,400	105,914	255,314
2011	162,416	112,865	275,281

States with high school associations that sanction/recognize lacrosse:

- | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|----------|
| *California | Michigan | Vermont |
| Colorado | Minnesota | Virginia |
| Connecticut | Missouri (girls only) | |
| Delaware | New Hampshire | |
| Florida | New Jersey | |
| Georgia | New York | |
| Illinois | North Carolina | |
| Maine | Pennsylvania | |
| Maryland | Rhode Island | |
| Massachusetts | South Carolina | |

* - Individual sections within the state can choose whether or not to sponsor the sport.

College

In an era of difficult financial challenges, lacrosse has continued to blossom at the collegiate level. The NCAA Men’s Lacrosse Championship Weekend has become the envy of just about every other NCAA sport with crowds of more than 40,000 routinely filling NFL stadiums to see the games. Colleges large and small, in almost every corner of the country, have added programs in recent years.

One of the landmark additions to the college lacrosse scene was the University of Michigan adding both men’s and women’s varsity programs. The men began play in 2012 and the women will begin play in 2014.

“The more we dug into it, the more we believed that this is just a sport of the future,” said Dave Brandon, Michigan’s athletic director. “Lacrosse’s trend lines in every way we could measure were impressive and made us believe that this is a place where we could grow and be a part of something that would over time be very big.”

Michigan is hardly alone. Thirty new collegiate varsity programs began play in 2012 and another 48 are set to begin in 2013. Over the last five years, lacrosse is the fastest growing sport at the NCAA level, and hundreds more compete at the club level.

The addition of eight new women’s Division I programs in 2013 will bring the total number of teams at that level to 100, and five more teams have already announced they are starting programs in 2014 or 2015. Men’s lacrosse has seen smaller growth at the Division I level than other levels of the sport, but even that is beginning to change. Five new programs (Boston University, Furman, High Point, Marquette and Monmouth) will add the sport.



Michigan became the first school with a BCS football team to add varsity men’s lacrosse since 1981.

NCAA Growth Rates (2006 to 2011) • Number of Schools Sponsoring the Sport

Men's Sports	2006	2011	Growth Rate	Women's Sports	2006	2011	Growth Rate
Lacrosse	222	280	26.1%	Lacrosse	271	357	31.7%
Volleyball	82	95	15.9%	Ice Hockey	75	87	16.0%
Indoor Track	567	616	8.6%	Golf	504	575	14.1%
Cross Country	879	952	8.3%	Indoor Track	630	694	10.2%
Swimming	381	410	7.6%	Cross Country	958	1026	7.1%

US Lacrosse Annual Participation Survey (Varsity, Junior College and Club Players)

Year	College Men	College Women	Total College Players
2006	16,444	10,207	26,651
2007	16,961	11,321	28,282
2008	18,148	11,674	29,822
2009	18,746	12,868	31,614
2010	19,326	13,105	32,431
2011	20,397	13,532	33,929

Professional

There are two professional lacrosse leagues operating in North America — Major League Lacrosse and the National Lacrosse League.

Major League Lacrosse is an outdoor league that played its first season in 2001. After playing the 2009, 2010 and 2011 seasons with six franchises (Boston, Chesapeake, Denver, Hamilton, Long Island, Rochester), the league has added teams in Charlotte, N.C., and Columbus, Ohio, for the 2012 season. The MLL is regularly featured on ESPN networks and also added a television deal with CBS Sports Network for the 2012 season. This year, MLL teams will play a 14-game schedule from April through August followed by a four-team single elimination playoff.

The National Lacrosse League is an indoor league that dates to 1987. The NLL features teams in both the U.S. and Canada with a heavy percentage of players coming from Canada, where box lacrosse is the country's official summer sport. The season runs from January through April and is then followed by the playoffs in May. In 2012, there were nine franchises (Buffalo, Calgary, Colorado, Edmonton, Minnesota, Philadelphia, Rochester, Toronto and Washington state) playing in the NLL.



Major League Lacrosse is one of two professional lacrosse leagues in North America.

Post-Collegiate Club

There are numerous former high school and college lacrosse players that give back to the game as coaches and officials, and many also continue to play at the post-collegiate club level. On the men’s side there are more than a dozen adult leagues that primarily take place in the spring and summer, including the American Lacrosse League, a league of more than 50 teams that stretches from Maine to Virginia. Men’s post-collegiate play also includes competition for older players in Masters, Grandmasters and Supermasters divisions, and there are numerous tournaments around the country for all levels of play. There are nearly 100 organized women’s post-collegiate club teams around the country that play in both local/regional leagues and tournaments throughout the year. More information about post-collegiate club playing opportunities for men and women are available on the US Lacrosse website at www.uslacrosse.org underneath the Players tab.

International

The Federation of International Lacrosse (FIL) was formed in the summer of 2008 as the new governing body for men’s and women’s lacrosse at the international level. The organization is the result of a merger between the International Federation of Women’s Lacrosse Associations (IFWLA) and the International Lacrosse Federation (ILF). The IFWLA had been sponsoring women’s world championships since 1982 and the ILF had been sponsoring men’s world championships since 1974.

US Lacrosse governs all aspects of the U.S. men’s and women’s national teams and plays a leading role in supporting men’s and women’s lacrosse development internationally.

World Championships are conducted through the FIL at the senior and U19 level every four years for both men and women. The United States has been dominant on the world stage, winning a total of 24 world championships since 1974.



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Listed below are the most recent world championship results in the five divisions that the FIL sponsors.

Year	Event	Location	Champion	U.S. Finish
2011	Women’s U19	Hannover, Germany	U.S.	1st
2011	Men’s Indoor	Prague, Czech Republic	Canada	3rd
2010	Men’s Senior	Manchester, England	U.S.	1st
2009	Women’s Senior	Prague, Czech Republic	U.S.	1st
2008	Men’s U19	Coquitlam, Canada	U.S.	1st

Upcoming World Championships

Year	Event	Location	Dates
2012	Men's U19	Turku, Finland	July 12-21, 2012
2013	Women's Senior	Oshawa, Canada	July 11-20, 2013
2014	Men's Senior	Denver, Colorado	July 10-19, 2014

Federation of International Lacrosse

Member Nations (25)

Australia
Austria
Bermuda
Canada
Czech Republic
Denmark
England
Finland
France
Germany
Hong Kong
Ireland
Iroquois/Haudenosaunee
Italy
Japan
Latvia
Netherlands
New Zealand
Norway
Scotland
Slovakia
South Korea
Spain
Sweden
United States
Wales

Associate Members (19)

Argentina
Belgium
Bulgaria
China
Costa Rica
Guatemala
Hungary
Israel
Mexico
Peru
Poland
Portugal
Russia
Serbia
Slovenia
Switzerland
Thailand
Turkey
Uganda

Emerging Nations (23)

Armenia
Belize
Brazil
Cambodia
Cayman Islands
Chile
Estonia
Ethiopia
Greece
Iceland
India
Indonesia
Iran
Jamaica
Lithuania
Namibia
Pakistan
Phillipines
Puerto Rico
Qatar
Romania
Singapore
South Africa

Did You Know?

Record Setting Attendance

Since moving to NFL stadiums in 2003, the NCAA Men's Lacrosse Championships have attracted at least 90,000 fans every year and more than 35,000 fans for each championship game. The only NCAA championship with higher attendance figures is Division I men's basketball. The record weekend attendance for the championships was set in 2007 when 123,225 fans came to M&T Bank Stadium in Baltimore over a three-day stretch. The record for the championship game attendance was set in 2008 with 48,970 fans heading to Gillette Stadium in Foxborough, Mass.

Private No More

Lacrosse is often stereotyped as a prep school sport, but it has grown way beyond those roots over the years. Maryland has traditionally had some of the strongest private school programs in the country, but in 2011, nearly 70 percent of the boys' programs in the state were at public schools. North Carolina, one of the states that has recently sanctioned high school lacrosse, has seen an increase of 67 percent in the number of public schools with boys' lacrosse programs since 2006. More than 80 percent of the programs in the state are at public schools. New York is the state with the largest number of high school lacrosse teams and nearly 85 percent of the programs are at public schools.

The Women Move West

The University of Colorado (2014) and the University of Southern California (2013) have both recently started varsity women's programs, bringing the number of women's programs in the Pac 12 to five. Beginning in 2014, there will be a total of 10 women's Division I teams in the West, and a total of 12 college teams at the Division I and III levels in California alone.

For More Information

Paul Krome

Associate Director of Marketing and Public Relations
 US Lacrosse
 410.235.6882 x107
 pkrome@uslacrosse.org



The NCAA Men's Lacrosse Championship Weekend routinely draws weekend crowds of 100,000 spectators.